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At the end of January, the *Exponent II* staff gathered to honor Laurel Thatcher Ulrich. She recently received both the American Historical Association's John Dunning Award for Distinguished Work in U.S. History and the 1990 Joan Kelley Award for Best Work in Women's History or Feminist Theory for her book *A Midwife's Tale: The Life of Martha Ballard, Based on Her Diary, 1785-1812*, published by Alfred A. Knopf. After dinner, Laurel discussed Martha Ballard as a healer and offered her thoughts about women, in general, as healers.

As we talked about the healing efforts of women, our discussion turned to the war in the Middle East and the need for healers that this conflict now presents. In an effort to be part of the healing process, we are asking all of you to lend your own voice in describing your reactions and insights to the outbreak of war in the Middle East. We will publish all of these personal essays that we can in the next issue (Volume 16, Number 2) and in forthcoming issues. Emma Lou Thayne begins our discourse by offering her and her daughter's thoughts. (See page 14.) Please have your essays (on IBM-compatible discs, if possible) to us by April 15, 1991.

We are again calling for submissions to the Helen Candland Stark Personal Essay Contest. Please send your entries—no longer than ten double-spaced manuscript pages and in triplicate—by August 1, 1991. We will announce the winner of the \$300 award in Volume 17, Number 1.

Remember, this is the year that you promised yourself that you were going to the *Exponent II* Reunion at Hillsboro Camp in Hillsboro, New Hampshire. It is scheduled for July 12, 13, and 14, 1991, and we are looking forward to seeing you there. As places are limited and on a first-come, first-served basis, better make your reservations early.

In addition to the wonderful discussion sessions and presentations, the reunion is just that—a reacquainting and reuniting of old and new friends. Hillsboro Camp offers a number of pleasant diversions as well—wonderful home-cooked meals, canoeing on and swimming in Peace Lake, and miles of trails for walking and talking. If you are interested in participating in one of the program sessions or have a talent to share, please let us know as soon as possible.

For reunion information and reservations, write to: Barbara Taylor, Reunion Chairwoman, *Exponent II*, Box 37, Arlington, MA 02174, or telephone her on the *Exponent* hotline, 617/862-1928.

DECISIONS: A Meditation

Helen Candland Stark
Provo, Utah

With two children in college and the youngest finishing ninth grade, I was offered a teaching position in a nearby, newly-opened high school. I wrote this at the seashore in Delaware, the nearest thing that I could find to wilderness.



I am five women: Cora, Carolyn, Camille, Chloe, and Columbine.



What shall I do with my year, Cora? Who are you, Cora?

"I come from the sea. I am feeling. I can be dark and angry. I can overwhelm you. I can grind your face in the sand and submerge you so you will never rise again, never get your breath. You will lose your breath bleeding against the sharp sand in the dark water.

"What do I want from your year? I want you to be at home in me. I want you to walk out to meet me, to move again toward that great mountain of water, building higher and higher. Do not turn away. Do not face the shore. Meet me—meet me! Ride over me, and I will lift you on a surge of power. Walk out to me before I thunder down on you in foam. Stretch out your hands. Stretch out your body. Lie prone. I will carry you beyond the surge. Then you may stand in the bright water and see before you the limitless ocean breathing in her great bosom. Behind you are the small people who are not aware that you have lain upon the sea alone and that it has upheld you.

"Some day you will learn that you cannot defend yourself against the sea. It is inexorable and I, Cora, the sea, am in all people. Do not try to defend yourself against these storms. You do not know their tides nor the stars that chart them. Let them swamp you with darkness. The sea is not solid. Your body can cut through it. The sea is in you, too. It sustains. It exhilarates. Give me your year to befriend the sea. You need never again be afraid."



It is good to see you, Caroline. Is there anything more comforting than the shining order of a house? There are such fun things left to do—painting the trays and canisters with Pennsylvania Dutch designs, refinishing the pine chest, making drapes for the porch windows. Outside, snow falls; inside, whole wheat bread bakes, and my good soup simmers. Was it Victor Hugo who said, "Only the pure in heart can make good soup?"

Home is still here, safe and cozy after I venture out for a course at the university. Here are my two safe areas—homemaking and classes. I am good at both.

I've struggled through the vital and turbulent

periods. How nice to rest. How satisfying to stay in bed until noon some rainy day. How nice to curl up with a *Good Housekeeping* magazine and a sandwich for lunch. Pretty soft. After all these strenuous years, every one fraught with some crisis or other, how luxurious to coast. And get rested—deeply rested. I can gloat over my store of canned fruit and frozen vegetables. I can take time for Karen. How much love she needs. How much is she getting? If I were not so tired, what a good time we could have.

My mother's voice in a fantasy, "Rest, Helen. You have done enough." Before now, I have disregarded that voice. I have found life more difficult, true, but has not the added complexity been precious?

Still, comfortable, fat, placid Caroline—how comfortable you are, comfortable Caroline. Let us have a cup of tea. Let us read a frivolous story in *Redbook*. Let us put together a new dessert, all wonderful whipped cream and goo.

Oh, how I love being home with you, Caroline.



"I am Camille. I wear a veil over my face, and I walk in the mist. I guide your hand when you write. I will tell you secrets you would never know otherwise. I can teach you wisdom when you are quiet. I can take you back in memory to treasures you have forgotten. But I must have your time, endless hours of time when time no longer matters.

"You must leave the dishes and the beds. You must lock the door behind you and follow me to a place that is solitary from all people. Do not try to return for a lost book or a child's cry. I am intuition, and I must be stayed for. What I tell you must be set down. You must set it down again and again, straining for words to say it right.

"I cannot promise that these words will mean much to anyone but you. Where they are leading is not for you to know. But you cannot shove me aside for a chore or an obligation. I will not stand in your way if you do these things, but I will plague you with unrest and weariness. Unconsciously, your soul will hunger for me.

"Give me your year. Though I bring no great gift, it is a gift from other worlds, and you have let it tarnish. Sanctuary, yes, come into my sanctuary and listen.



"I am Chloe. I am cool and composed. I look on life with level eyes. My plans are expedited. The here and now is your world. Make your mark on it. You know what needs to be done. You have training. Make the most of it. Why should you throw away tools that are only partially used? Sharpen them. Polish them. You know the excitement of gathering data, seeing a pattern emerge.

"You've done your stint in the kitchen. You can feed souls in other ways. Here is a place where you can feel both useful and important. It will matter how you look. You can be svelte, again, and wear sophisticated clothes. You'll have an absorbing interest. Let your family members fend for themselves. When you offered yourself, heart and soul, they took you for granted. Now somebody else needs you and wants you. You will like being a person and not just a function."

Yes, my mind hears you, Chloe. Already, I am fired up by that first day of school. There is to be a student questionnaire that will let me know areas of strength or weakness. What satisfaction it will be to devise methods of putting across an idea.

How awful if I didn't have a room of my own where I could establish my own climate and have my materials at hand.

Am I up to coping with Mrs. T. who is above me on the faculty totem pole? Here is an angle that bothers me—brassy hair and sexy hips.

Still, this is an opportunity that came right to my door. How guilt-edged do I need things? Why, now, do I want to run for cover? Too lazy? Too afraid I cannot measure up? Are my archangels trying to tell me that this is an unwise commitment? Is Mrs. T. an opportunity or an excuse? Is one ever deliberately ready to move into a new phase? With this precious, do-what-I-want year, why do I hesitate about plunging into the intellectual world?



Well, Columbine, where did you come from? When I started to name these women, there were only four, and then, for heaven's sake, you popped out the page.

I certainly don't know what to do with you, you irresponsible chit. Why don't you grow up and carry your own load? You get in everyone's way always wanting someone to stop and pay attention, to button you up or something. You always have to be coped with in one way or another. You're not good for anything. You don't earn your keep. You always look thin and underfed, limping about with some hurt or other. If I leave you alone, you just sort of pine away; yet, you don't seem to be kin or anything.

How the hell did you get in here, anyway, with your ragged clothes and stringy hair and those great, sad eyes?

Now what do you want out of my year? I certainly don't need you hovering about in the background all the time, looking put upon.

But don't go away. I'd feel terribly lost and guilty. It seems I owe you something, but I can't figure out what. You just don't seem part of the team.

I'm listening for the answer to my question. You say you need compassion? Ah! That means that I must suffer, too.

ASSESSING THE FORCES—WOMEN'S LIVES

Pamela Bookstaber
Short Hills, New Jersey

I am entering my fifth year as Relief Society president in a large ward. I often feel like I have one foot in a rushing river of changes in women's lives and one foot on the immovable bank of Church traditions. I'm pulled in opposing directions. Like most of us, I am deeply grateful for the joy Church service has brought me. There have been moments of spiritual growth that have been invaluable, springing directly from sacrifices I have made serving wherever I have been called. Though my latest stint is beginning to seem awfully long, through it I have indeed found and developed a part of myself that I hope never to lay aside. However, during some periods, I have felt that the cost of Church service has been very high, maybe too high.

My purpose in writing is to outline the forces currently found pressing in women's lives to which Church authorities need to adapt their calls for service. They are: first, the tremendous importance of strong family relationships in a morally deteriorating society; second, the impact of feminism on women's relationships to male authorities; third, the increasing economic pressures families face; and fourth, the high value our society places on efficient and meaningful use of time.

The first issue, that strong family relationships are needed now more than ever before, reflects my personal challenge. I have six children ages newborn to fourteen years and a husband with a high-pressure job in New York City that includes almost three hours of commuting time daily. My four boys are bright, intense, and competitive—combative to be exact. They require a lot of attention and composed parents who can respond to them with calm and a sense of humor. And my daughter is an average two and a half year old; I can't take my eyes off her for a minute. But Church duties fill whatever spare moments there are after housekeeping and mothering necessities, leaving me feeling pressured and anxious, not able to cope as well as I know I could if I only had less to think about. In other words, when I'm under pressure with Relief Society problems, I find it virtually impossible to deal with the pressures of childrearing.

For a while, I thought I was anxious because I wasn't spending enough time on myself, but after much prayer and reflection, I realized many of my own essential needs were being met through this service. It was my family that was suffering. I could find peace, the answer came, by attending to them more. I don't mention this as a general prescription for happiness to everyone; it was a private answer to my specific prayers. It was right on, but the challenge of focusing more on these children or of emptying my life somewhat so that I can enjoy them more is a daily struggle for me. I fail more than I succeed.

The irony is that I want to devote my gifts to them while they're home, that time is flying fast, and that excessive Church duties make it so difficult.

Elder Boyd K. Packer said women are spared holding the priesthood so that their mothering duties would not be intruded upon. "The obligations of motherhood are neverending. The addition of...the priesthood would constitute an intrusion into, an interruption to, perhaps the avoidance of, that crucial contribution which only a mother can provide." (*Ensign*, July 1989, p. 74)

While Elder Packer's statement raises several questions (Don't mothers' obligations end, at least as an occupation, when the children leave home? What about the majority of years of a woman's life before and after children? What about the growing numbers of member women who will never become mothers?), let's just look at the main

sentiment Elder Packer expresses: Mothers need protection from heavy responsibilities that would compete with mothering.

While some mothers of young families would dispute this, I feel it is true for me given my kids and my temperament. But does the Church offer any protection to mothers? Look around. How many organization presidencies and early-morning seminary teachers are mothers of young children? The Church, in effect, expects mothers to take on part-time jobs while at the same time teaching them that any distraction, even priesthood duties (which are no different from Church service), can hinder their effectiveness as mothers. I wonder if all the training the Church has given to parents to put their families first is beginning to be responsible for some denials to serve in the Church. And I wonder why the Church doesn't really protect mothers more from heavy callings.

Not every mother needs this protection, but the fact that it is rarely even an issue seems so odd to me. When I think of the strain of the past four years as my family has increased but my Church service has not decreased, I have this sickening feeling that my sense of duty to the Church may have something to do with my decision not to have more children. I know that rationally this is wrong, that the Church teaches us to put family first. But there is a vast difference between what we preach and what we do and expect and ask of others.

Church authorities are right to preach that strong family relationships are more vital now than ever before, but are they willing to allow parents the time it takes to build those relationships? The Church recognized the need to cut back on the amount of time spent in meetings years ago, but has it really been cut back significantly? Perhaps parents are taking matters into their own hands by refusing callings in order simply to stay home.

Another reason for the seeming lack of commitment by women to Church service may have to do with the unsettling effects of the feminist movement. I believe I am hearing a growing skepticism in Relief Society. I hear some older women complain that they don't fit in or that they feel displaced or disoriented or that they just feel a certain emptiness in one place in their hearts. The feminist movement has challenged the basis they built their lives upon, and no one can escape self-examination and examination of Church dogma in the cold light of feminist ideas. Reactions by older women range from anger—usually at younger women who are trying to mesh feminism with Church ideals—to uneasiness that their chosen lifestyle of the last thirty years is being questioned to a kind of quiet sense of betrayal that they were not better prepared for the empty nest or that somehow Church teachings denied them some choices for personal growth. I see older women as having a tougher time with the feminist upheaval than the younger ones, who seem to have more choices available to them and who seem to be finding ways to interweave feminist ideas and Church teachings.

The uncertainty that I hear in Relief Society as women feel the foundation shifting beneath them cannot help but extend to uncertainty in women's relationships with local Church authorities. More women are less likely to trust Church authorities because women everywhere are doubting that men know what is best for them. The less-trusting attitude that some women have may also be part of a general lack of respect toward traditional authority in society: People don't give doctors, lawyers, teachers, and clergymen their full trust as they did formerly; the traditional Mormon relationship to

authority may be a natural extension of this general distrust. This disorientation or distrust may cause women to withhold their full allegiance to priesthood authority for a time until the dust settles.

Another force that we all need to adjust to is the fact that the economic structure of developed countries has changed. Many women are entering the work force. The increasing number of two-family incomes exerts increasing price pressure on housing and other goods. As more women work, more Mormon women will have to work, not to buy boats and fancy houses as the charge is usually made but to pay for adequate housing in a decent school district. The fact that sooner or later many Mormon women will have to return to work coupled with the growing percentage of single women in the Church, also full-time workers, means that Mormon women generally have less time for anything. Let's face it: We only have time for what is most important. And that leads me to my final point.

I wonder if a growing number of Mormons are feeling what I'm feeling: that Church programs have become too cumbersome, complicated, and demanding for the good they produce. Perhaps people are not accepting callings because the callings are not meaningful: They do not save souls; they just keep a large body of tradition repeating itself. Because our culture strongly values efficient and meaningful use of time, many Church callings are going to fail the little cost-benefit analyses that we do in our heads. Here are my suggestions for pruning back Church programs in order to make more time for the really important soul-saving work:

- Eliminate homemaking meetings; they are too labor intensive for the good they yield. If it's so important to teach women certain skills, the Church can produce a series of video tapes for individual use. Women can also be encouraged to use community resources such as adult education classes and self-help books.
 - Stake and ward training meetings should be fewer and briefer. Again, videos should be used to train leaders. The telephone and the mail should be used more often.
 - Sunday School classes should be eliminated; instead Sacrament Meeting speakers should be assigned to discourse on the scripture passage of the week.
 - Home teaching and visiting teaching should be combined into one visit and only to the less active or those with special needs.
 - The Bishop's Storehouse system seems highly inefficient in my area as a way of getting groceries to poor members. Has anyone ever done a cost-benefit analysis on the Storehouse?
 - Eliminate more of the busy work, we could seriously call people to live the basics in their own lives: personal scripture study and prayer, family scripture study and prayer, journal keeping, family history writing, temple worship, family home evening, family support activities, missionary work among neighbors or through community involvement, welfare work, and compassionate service. More people could be called to fellowship an inactive family or to join school and community groups or to minister to a needy individual.
- When faithful members begin to withhold their willingness to serve, Church authorities are right to wonder why. "Increased selfishness" is too quickly cited. The women in my ward always respond with hard labor and love when there is a real need. But with the tremendous pressures on families morally, economically, and practically, who can blame us for demanding that there indeed be a real need that will be serviced by our sacrifice? ■

YOU CAN'T ENJOY WHAT YOU DON'T DO

Linda Gould Collins
Bethesda, Maryland

Editor's Note: The following article has been taken from the keynote address for a conference, held at BYU in 1984, called "Women in Business." The conference was sponsored by the ASBYU Women's office; the ideas discussed continue to be of relevance to Mormon women.

The theme for this conference, "A New Norm for Mormon Women," suggests an awareness of the increasing breadth of experience of the women of the Church. We are becoming more diverse not only in America's suburbs, where we are most numerous, but we are also coming to understand the tremendous variety of situations and opportunities that exist for our sisters all over the world. In suggesting the theme of a new norm for Mormon women, I hope that we all agree that we are adding to the dimensions of our collective experiences and not suggesting that the things we will talk about tonight—largely the things of the world—are a substitute for the cultural patterns of the last fifty or so years or for the commandment that we marry and have families. After all, it would be a dreadful tyranny if we were to suggest that we have found the only way for an LDS woman to be happy and to fulfill the Lord's plan for her exaltation. So let us remember that we are simply attempting to add a new dimension, to love and comfort one another, to provide mutual support, and to aid one another in finding the length and breadth and depth and height of our souls and capabilities.

I would like to add to our theme the wisest piece of advice that has ever been given to me. One lonely Saturday afternoon when I was almost twenty, my father encouraged me to invite someone to go to a movie because, he said, "You can't enjoy what you don't do." In discussing norms, our emphasis should be in doing—not in dreaming, hoping, wishing, philosophizing, or rationalizing, but on doing.

If we think of norms and doing as they relate to our cultural patterns in the Church, we find a great emphasis on doing. What do Mormon women do? They first and foremost get married. Then, they cook, sew, bake bread, quilt, have numerous children, all of whom are clean, clever, and gifted (or at least develop their talents). Mormon women serve the Church, serve the community, serve their husbands, serve dinner on time, and have no dust bunnies under the bed or in the corners. All of this is accomplished, I should add, before they have reached age twenty-five, or else they have failed.

Although no one ever told me so in Mutual or during my college days, it is possible to keep the commandments, read your scriptures, have faith, do your Church work, have a good figure, and still not be married when you graduate from college, or even when you are twenty-five or thirty. It doesn't mean that anything is wrong with you; it merely means that you are not part of the cultural norm that has become institutionalized over many years.

However, in our current culture, we need not feel strange nor peculiar if we long for personal achievement, some independence, and, yes, even financial reward. The only requirement imposed on all of us is to enlarge our souls and grow in our testimonies of the Savior. It is the growth of the Church that gives us room to be at one with the household of faith and, yet, have experiences that are other than or in addition to our objectives and desires for celestial marriages.

The following examples of the changes this growth is bringing are from my own heritage. My father's sisters, Irene and Olive, were two of the more beautiful and ambitious young women in Salt Lake in the early 1930s. Olive helped to found the radio station that grew into the KSL radio and television empire. She introduced the idea of "radio drama," which was later picked up in New York and Los Angeles and evolved into that great American institute, the "soap opera." She died of brain cancer long before I was born; I long to meet her in the next life. Irene is still living and, at 70, remains beautiful and stylish and is more proficient with a computer than I will ever be. With a very small group, Irene helped build the UCLA adult education and extension program into the largest in the country. She still works 50-60 hours a week and is spending her "spare" time writing a novel.

For all my love for Irene and my curiosity about Olive, there remains a haunting reality. Each of them tried desperately to fit into the Mormon culture of their era, but neither of them succeeded. Their remarkable achievements and, admittedly, some of their own choices, put them outside the household of faith. If they were our peers, I believe that they would be one with us because there would now be more understanding of and admiration for their creativity and brilliance.

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Creativity and brilliance are, however, not unknown among women within the household of faith. If you were a serious musician in Salt Lake, Ogden, or Provo between 1935 and 1941, you would most probably have heard of a fine pianist by the name of Francis Langston, my mother. Her family had been wealthy and prominent before the depression, but her grandfather had been a boss in the anti-Mormon party that had political control during the years from the late 1890s until after World War I. In 1941, finding Salt Lake too confining, she went east, joined the Washington Ward, and helped to establish the Church in the East. When my sisters were still small, she went to work outside her home. Over the course of forty years, she has worked ceaselessly and is known widely for her excellence, devotion, and hard work. I have watched her work and work and work, I have heard her play Bach, and I have no doubt of her love for the Savior. Her heritage was outside the Church; her creativity and musical genius blessed

the Church. She worked outside the home, and she continues even now to develop her remarkable gift. Her home and family were important to her, and despite her working, her life certainly fit the "Dad goes to work and Mom manages the family" pattern best known to all of us. Nonetheless, her continual message to me was that a woman works both inside and outside the home, develops her talents and interests, and blesses others with them.

These three women—my two aunts and my mother—demonstrate that, even forty or fifty years ago, there were no limits on the ability of Mormon women to achieve prominence in fields where they had great talent. Each expanded her capability, and Irene and my mother were, in addition, successful mothers. There were limits, however, on the ability of our culture to accept these levels of performance.

Those limitations are disappearing gradually, but not rapidly. Again, let me illustrate from my own experience.

I graduated from high school in 1964. That summer, I babysat for a prominent lawyer who lived in our ward. Because I had just graduated from high school, the question he asked me as he drove me home one June afternoon was a reasonable one. I'll never forget it. He asked me what I planned for college. I told him that I wanted to major in English and then go to law school. His reply was instant. He said, "Linda, law school is no place for a girl." I still have a mental snapshot of that moment: I remember where we were on the road, what the weather was like, and how suddenly confused I was. My father, a faithful and committed Church leader, had been encouraging me since I was eleven to go to law school. It had never occurred to me that law school was no place for a girl.

I went through the BYU Honors Program, majored in English, got good grades, but never could get anyone to talk to me seriously about law school. I quietly gave up, got a master's degree in literature, and went about my business. In 1970, teaching jobs were non-existent; I worked as a secretary. Working and going to the singles' ward in Washington, D.C., hoping that I would be swept away by true love and then be able to get about my life wasn't enough. By a miracle that I know was from the Lord, a teaching job turned up, and it challenged me and taught me and blessed me. But there was still no love to be found, and a singles' ward didn't give me the kind of Church experience that satisfied me. On July 25, 1973, I faced myself in the mirror and knew I had to go to law school. I called that same attorney from my home ward to tell him my wishes and to request that he write a recommendation. He agreed that the world had changed since 1964, that I should go to law school, and he offered his assistance. Again, the Lord provided a miracle, and a month later I entered the first class at the BYU Law School.

I was not a star in law school. I worked harder than I ever had in my life; academically, it was extremely difficult, and culturally, it was agony. There were twelve women among the original one hundred and fifty-four students; only eight of us finished. While the professors were extremely

supportive, some of our classmates accused me of taking the place of "breadwinners and priesthood holders," and most of the people we dealt with, both in and out of the school, assumed that we were husband-hunting and would never practice our profession. There was no norm for us; we had to break new ground.

Great comfort came for me during my first year of law school. In 1973, Harold B. Lee was president of the Church. Just a few months before his death, he addressed the BYU studentbody and made a comment that should be hung in every dorm and every apartment. He said that all of the young women in the Church should be fully prepared to provide for themselves and should develop their own skills, talents, and interests as "an assurance against the inevitable tragedies of life."

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"An assurance against the inevitable tragedies of life." Note that he did not say to be prepared to get a job until you get married, nor did he place any limits on the kinds of skills to develop. Presumably, then, traditional jobs and unconventional professions are equally acceptable, so long as we develop what is truly significant for us individually. He said to develop your skills, talents, and interests. That process would provide an assurance against the tragedies of life. Two of those tragedies are obvious. Death and divorce leave great sorrow in their wake, particularly if there are children involved. What happens to women who find themselves alone, or, worse, alone with children, and no skills? There is an extra burden of sorrow.

But there are two other "tragedies" that we need to assure against. One is really not a tragedy; it is more a circumstance. Some of us will never marry. Remember, you can't enjoy what you don't do. If you have not found work that will satisfy, challenge, stimulate, and demand the very most of you, then you will face a bitter tragedy of life—the failure to develop your full capacity. The Lord expects this of us, and we can expect no less of ourselves.

Work and creativity should not be viewed with suspicion, or fear, but rather embraced as gifts from the Lord, and everything we do should be founded on principles of faithfulness.

But how do we go about being faithful and competent? Again, my father's advice: You can't enjoy (or, let's add, be competent at) what you don't do. Karen Lynn has suggested an interesting approach. "I would like to suggest two mental exercises for a bright, young, single woman. First, pretend that by some means you had access to a prophecy that told you that a wonderful marriage would come your way but not until you were thirty or thirty-five or forty. In the meantime, you are on your own; your life and its meaning are your sole responsibility. How would your plans change? Why not embark on those plans anyway? Nothing is lost. Second, consider for a minute how you would view your future if you were a male. Of course, in your plans, you take into account the fact that you are female, just as you take into account any other important fact. But this mental exercise may help

you focus on what you truly love, what you really wish to include in your life, what the most important talents are that your Heavenly Father has given you."

Do you like to read, write, talk, draw, sing, dance, play with numbers, or ask questions? All of these can be accommodated in the world. Do you like fierce, head-to-head competition? There is nothing necessarily unfeminine about this, and the business world thrives on those motivations, properly channeled and tempered. Do you want money? Remember that the windows of heaven open to the rich and poor tithing payer alike, and remember, too, that a growing church needs resources.

The point is to look carefully at what you like, want, and are good at and not to shrink from those realities. When you have made the decision, the great adventure begins. It is an adventure of discovery to bring out your greatest capabilities. If you work at it and develop an attitude that excellence is the acceptable norm; then, the opportunities and mentors critical to success will present themselves.

I know for a certainty that the Lord has provided the way for me to achieve whatever success in the world that I have; I also know that I worked very hard at things I did well and was prepared for every opportunity that came my way. Obviously, in temporal matters as well as spiritual ones, the Lord can't give you something that you're not prepared for.

All of this notwithstanding, we also know that nothing is more important, and nothing is more challenging than our relationships with those we love. No professional setback is as devastating as the inevitable misunderstandings that occur in those relationships when people are spending enormous amounts of physical, intellectual, and emotional energy separate from your life together.

I have not been able to have children, and I know that working mothers who have children face extraordinary challenges from the superwomen burdens that they impose on themselves and from some of the statements of our leaders. I have no first-hand experience with the way to resolve these dilemmas. I do know, however, some children who are obnoxious and whose mothers do not work outside their homes. Similarly, some of the loveliest children I know are the sons and daughters of two LDS professionals who work very long hours.

The point is that like any other challenges in life, the problems of reconciling career and professional needs with home, love, and family are solved by trusting in the Lord, trusting in our ability to make correct choices, having faith, and maintaining a desire to bless others.

It will not be easy to be either a single or married professional woman in the Church. Some of the traditional avenues of Church service will be foreclosed to you, not because you aren't in the mainstream but because you simply are not available. For example, you probably won't be able to take on a visiting teaching assignment for a dependent sister who needs you regularly during the day. This does not mean you cannot serve or be a visiting teacher; it simply means you must find another way to learn about the needs of others and to help satisfy those needs. Although this is not easy, you must find ways to serve because I can assure you that you will need the blessings, support, and comfort that come only from participation in and service to the Church.

Trying to get all of these career, wife, mother, and superstar objectives sorted out means that there will be days when you feel like a stranger in the midst of what you know and love. I often felt that way when I was in school, and at times, I still feel that way. In the Church, a professional woman is sometimes treated as if she were dangerous or a bit of a liberal; yet, in her professional world, her values, behavior, and Church affiliation make her a real conservative. The apostle Paul anticipated those

times when we feel, like Eliza Snow, that someone has whispered, "You're a stranger here." He wrote to the saints at Corinth and, in the preamble to his famous discourse on charity, explained how we should all view each other as a part of the whole body of Christ.

"For as the body is one and hath many members, ...so also is Christ. In the body is not one member, but many. If the foot shall say, because I am not of the hand, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body? And if the ear shall say because I am not of the eye, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body? If the whole body were an eye, where were the hearing? If the whole body were hearing, where were the smelling? But now hath God set the members of the body, as it hath pleased him...the eye cannot say unto the hand, I have no need of thee; nor again the head to the feet, I have no need of you....God hath tempered the body together...that there be no schism in the body, but that the members should have the same care one for another....Now ye are the body of Christ, and the members in particular."

In our diversity, we can set new norms for LDS women. We can accept the creativity and brilliance of women around us, and we can feel comforted when we know that we have prepared ourselves. We can have the priorities of love and family as well as develop ourselves personally and in ways that enrich and bless the world. We can find ways to serve the Church and find our sustenance in the fellowship of the Saints and the ordinances of the gospel. Finally, we can adopt my dad's motto, "You can't enjoy what you don't do." ■

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FORGIVE AND FORGET

Cecilia Larkin-Webber
Bethel, Connecticut

From the day that we reach eighteen months and take that giant leap into the Church nursery, our formal religious training begins. We are taught of love, faith, charity, God, and eternal families. We are also taught to forgive and forget. But what about the child who has been emotionally, physically, or sexually abused? Perhaps for the benefit of his own soul she should forgive. But forget? No! Hopefully, the memories can be used as tools to help protect her from future abuse.

In July of 1967, my two sisters, one brother, my parents, and I made the long trip across the United States from New York to Salt Lake City to be sealed as a family for time and all eternity. I was only seven years old, but I remember this experience like it was yesterday. I remember a nursery where my siblings and I waited, for what seemed like forever, for my parents to be sealed. Then, a little old lady, who told us of the angels that often visited the temple, escorted us out of this room. I can't remember our ever being so quiet and reverent before. When we entered the sealing room, my parents were glowing. As we all knelt around the

altar, I felt for the first time the spirit burning in my heart. We all felt it; we cried as we realized that from this day forward we would be "together forever," a "forever family."

In July 1989, twenty-two years after that loving day, my parents' civil divorce was final. Five days after my mother's heart was shattered in a court house in Stamford, Connecticut, my father married a woman with kids the ages of my sister's children in the home of his dear friend and bishop.

My mother and we kids have been left to pick up the pieces of shattered testimonies. Didn't those commitments and sacred covenants in the temple mean anything? I thought God would not be mocked. Why then did the bishop, stake president, and regional representative stand by and encourage an eternal family to be destroyed? "We all have our free agency," they would say. "Doesn't your father deserve to be happy?" Perhaps if my mother had been mean or cruel in some way, but the only error she made was getting older.

I served a mission in Peru; I baptized over 300 people, bringing them into a church that I loved

and knew had been a great support to me and my family since our joining in the early sixties. But now I hesitate when sharing the gospel. Has our Church "progressed" so far as to allow a married man to date, to fall in love, to become engaged, and to have a physical relationship with another woman before the civil marriage to his current wife has been terminated? Or even before a legal separation or any kind of divorce proceedings have begun or even been talked about?

In the next year, my father will take his new bride to the temple and be sealed for time and all eternity. Then what about us, his old "forever family" that he deceived and destroyed? Don't we matter? We have been told just to forgive and forget. Sure, I can say that in time I may be able to forgive him, but I cannot forget because I am not perfect. I'm glad for my memories because they will be what ultimately saves me from ever putting my trust in a man who almost made me lose something I treasure more than anything in the world—my testimony. ■

FROM VICTIM TO SURVIVOR

Siri Edwards
Paradise, California

On September 24, 1984, I walked into Anne Giel's counseling office. It had not been an easy ride up the elevator to the third floor. My stomach had nothing in it, my appetite having been impaired. Whatever force was holding me up I expected to be let loose by at any second. Two and a half years of history were behind this decision to get help. Many of the times before that were black. I looked back to walls, rooms, and long periods of gray. There had been almost no pure joy in my experiences. I was held back by a victimization that had taken a hold of my strength, my faith, and at one point, my desire to live.

For nine months of my life, I had been involved in a community group led by a man who sexually molested teenage girls. I was one of them. The details of what he did are now contained in a police report. As a result of that difficult ride in the elevator, I no longer have to keep them in my mind.

Anne Giel's office held an adequate amount of light. It overlooked an alley so that the sunlight was blocked by the building next door. I sat in a chair next to my mother asking myself if it were too late to go back down the elevator and run. I had nowhere to run, but running had become instinctive ever since I was molested. I had run from the parental suggestions to see a counselor. I had run from every remembrance of that man's words, his face, and his actions. I had run from the nightmares and from any situation where I might have to be alone with a male. I had run at all costs. After spending so much time avoiding any remembrance of the incidents, they finally pushed themselves through my refusals to get help. This time, I had to acknowledge them. This time, in that office, I sat still.

Suppressing the urge to ignore statements directed to my feelings, I began to respond to Anne. "How do you feel, Siri?" she asked. "Like I want to leave."

"It would be nice to leave, wouldn't it, and forget this."

"But I really won't forget, right?"

I gave into talking. I rationalized that if by now I wasn't able to bury the terror that I relived every day, I wouldn't be able to do so alone.

Anne asked questions of me for an hour. I began to leave her office and had no intention of ever seeing her again. "Siri, I'd like it if you would come back at this same time next week," she said with a soft smile. I couldn't understand why she'd want to see me again. I was almost intolerant of her questions. I didn't answer over half of them, and I wasn't at all friendly.

I rode back down the elevator with her business card noting the next appointment crumpled in my hand. I expected the pain in my stomach to last me the rest of my life. I cried for hours.

I contracted to attend two sessions. After the second session, a strange feeling came over me. Relief. I felt relief. I was not carrying my burden alone. All of a sudden, someone with professional training was making it all understandable.

After realizing that Anne was a good person and that she did indeed care about me, I began to trust her. I had the idea that because she was a counselor, she was paid to care. I thought if I were to ever have real help it would have to be from a friend. I didn't really trust her for the first ten sessions, a trust that I needed to have in order to progress. It took me a long time to dig out what was underneath my attitude and to trust her. I had gone from innocent, loving, and secure to feeling guilty, shamed, and angry—even hateful and skeptical. I was unsure of everyone around me. I tested Anne for a long time. I wanted to be sure that I could trust without being hurt.

I had to crack my shell from the inside. This cannot be done from the outside. I understood after many weeks that Anne's function as a coun-

selor was not to solve my problems but to lead me to my own solutions—not to take control away but to empower me to take it on my own—so I would achieve the reward of recovery for myself. It wasn't until I gave up the dream of being rescued and faced that it was within me to change from victim to survivor that I began to truly change.

Anne helped me. It takes a counselor who has dedication and insight to help a person recover from sexual assault. Anne specializes in that, which is why my parents encouraged me to see her.

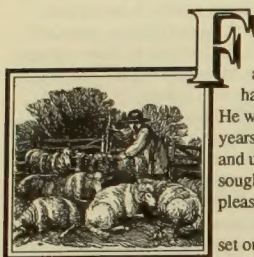
I feel I have a message now. I want to encourage survivors of sexual assault to seek help. Education in the form of counseling is gradual. It is emotionally cleansing. I could ask my counselor any question I wanted, and I had time enough with someone who had the knowledge to understand, to explain and to learn how I was similar to and different from other survivors. It can be especially important for one who is victimized to know she is not alone. It's good to hear a counselor say, "Many kids who've been molested feel these things." Because of their expertise, counselors can answer questions and can help lead survivors to find their own solutions.

I had been too confused and too overburdened to handle the problem alone. I'm so grateful that I sought counseling. Today, I am free from nightmares and low self-esteem and from what I thought was unbearable pain and guilt. In addition, counseling gave me more insight about myself and about life than just the experience of the sexual assault. Through counseling, I learned empathy, problem-solving, and patience that I am able to apply to all parts of my life.

Spencer W. Kimball has told us that Heavenly Father loves us, but it is usually through another person that He meets our needs. We only need to give Him the chance to do that by seeking a source of help. ■

THE SHEPHERD AND THE SHEEP

Lillian Woodland
St. George, Utah



Fatherless Sean had left the flock. He was nineteen-years-old, confused and unhappy; he sought immediate pleasure elsewhere.

Carolyn did not set out to thrust aside the life-long teachings she cherished. She gave into temptation and found herself unmarried and pregnant. She felt she had altered her status—that she could no longer fit in; she left the fold.

As a teacher, I have witnessed situations such as these over and over again. I fully accept the importance of the shepherd's responsibility to reach out and try to retrieve those who have perilously strayed. In fact, we are told that our uppermost desire should be to bring them back.

Ezekiel (34:16), in speaking of God's care of his flock, says, "I will seek that which is lost, and bring again that which was driven away, and will bind up that which was broken and will strengthen that which was sick...."

I have questioned, however, the limits to which the shepherd should reach and how much time the shepherd should remain away from the steadfast sheep in seeking and working to return the lost one. Jean, Sean's mother, had younger children still living at home and a daughter attending Brigham Young University. She was all-inclusive mother, father, and spiritually-appointed "shepherd" to this flock. She faced the dilemma of caring for the needs of these children and, yet, having to leave the "ninety and nine" to bring back Sean, the lost lamb.

In the fields, shepherds often find the absent animals by observing the screeches of the vultures overhead or the howls of the wolves in the distance. These creatures prey upon other animals in distress. Survival of the one who strays frequently depends upon swift and knowing action by the caretaker.

Swift action on the part of the shepherd is not always possible with young people who stray. More often, those who stray have to cope personally with the consequences of their choices.

Sean experimented with marijuana. He left home for a remote college town to live with his girlfriend, working hard at minimal wage to provide housing, food, and the necessities for the two of them while the younger woman attended college classes. At the end of a year, the young woman informed him that she found the relationship no longer satisfying, that someone more exciting had won her affections.

Loneliness surrounded Sean. He was empty; he had no money, no friends, and nothing to believe in. In the midst of his despair, Jean telephoned to invite him to join the family celebration of Sandra's temple wedding. He wasn't sure he could fit in comfortably, but Jean assured him that the entire family loved him and that he would always belong with them. Sean remained uncertain that he could face the family until he received a letter from his mother containing a plane ticket and a check for a new suit.

"Why not go?" he thought. "They really want me."

Sandra's joy and sense of permanence contrasted with the vacuum of despair that Sean felt. He realized he wanted that eternal direction for his life and that somehow he would have to find it.

Through an extended period of painful repentance and personal searching, Sean returned to strong spiritual values and eventually served a mission. Much later, Sean jubilantly celebrated his own temple marriage.

I rejoiced in this role reversal. I had been in Sean's cheering section, hoping, pleading, praying for his ultimate triumph. I witnessed right overcoming wrong, and I was gratified. Gnawingly, however, I was plagued with the question, "Was such success usually the rule?"

Carolyn's plight was not so neatly resolved. She believed that it was her responsibility to provide her infant with the best possible pre-natal life. She opted, early on, to allow the child to be adopted. During her pregnancy, she elected to leave her hometown and live with a foster couple in a distant community.

In this unfamiliar setting, Carolyn began her final year of high school. She replaced the playful antics of a high school senior with determination to stretch her mind and seriously prepare for college. Throughout the nine months of her pregnancy, Carolyn avoided the school bus and trudged two miles to school—then two miles home again—to provide adequate exercise for a healthy pregnancy and delivery. She ate selectively and allowed herself adequate rest.

Carolyn's spirits, however, periodically faltered. She was lonely. Although fellow students were kind and friendly, they were involved in different interests and activities. Away from family and friends, Carolyn relied upon her foster parents—her temporary shepherds. Together, they shared tears, hugs, massages, and sometimes laughter. They reminded her that the Lord loved her. Carolyn's temporary shepherds helped her believe that, although her pregnancy was the result of a mistake, she had made a commendable effort to make amends.

Following the birth of a healthy boy, Carolyn returned home to resume her life, releasing the infant to a grateful adoptive couple. She soon became aware that she could not return to her former standing in her hometown. Her peer group felt uncomfortable with her; through her troubled experience, she had gained maturity beyond her years.

I was saddened at the solace that eluded Carolyn. "Hadden't she paid her penance?" I wondered. "Was her mistake to haunt her continually? Couldn't any benefit be found in her trial?"

Fearing that she would not fit the mold at a Church school, Carolyn changed her plans and enrolled in a state university. She immersed herself in learning and becoming all that she could. She now has a subdued but measured hope as well as a budding faith that a compatible LDS young man will want to share her future and accept her past. Carolyn had tenuously returned to the fold.

But what can we do for the sheep that choose to remain lost? Generally, a shepherd goes before his sheep, and the sheep follow, displaying an attachment to their master's voice, which they seem to recognize. But, can a leader successfully lead the sheep if they are unwilling to follow?

I believe that the quality and degree of the shepherd's commitment does not always equate with positive rescue results. Occasions occur when, in spite of continued efforts of the caretaker, the lost lamb becomes more, not less, entangled.

Although Ron had some behavior problems

during his early years, his parents were able to help him remain close to the wholesome beliefs honored by his family. The serious problems began to surface about the time he received his driver's license.

He began experimenting with alcohol. He liked the glamour associated with drinking, but it was ruthless with him; he became angry and unstable under its influence. On repeated occasions, Ron would hurl insults and threats and begin fighting after drinking. Alcohol brought on a complete reversal of his usual emotions and behavior.

Ron's parents constantly reached out to help him regain a balance and start anew. Family members believed that with Ron's maturation, professional support, and their support, his behavior would turn around.

As a young man, Ron was induced to try cocaine. His dependency upon that drug was almost immediate. Life became a series of hellish nightmares for the entire family. Ron's denial of his dependency was obsessive. Because he was of legal age, his parents were prevented from executing the steps that they could have taken to bring about treatment. Eventually, Ron's addiction consumed all he owned, all his emotional and spiritual stability, and probably his future.

I question what, in such an instance, the shepherd can and should do. When the lamb refuses to follow the shepherd and the flock, the shepherd faces difficult decisions.

Perhaps, while still expressing hope and unconditional love for the lost one, the shepherd should return to the other "ninety and nine." The wayward sheep could possibly learn more by the consequences of his own choices than he has through the repeated teaching attempts of the shepherd.

A wise person often recognizes that he should cease to try to force change where he is powerless to do so. Rather, if he allows the consistently willful lost one to find his way back, then a basis for change exists. If the lost one rediscovers his own spiritual awareness, he can bring about his own desired improvement.

Apparently, it is very difficult for the responsible shepherd to let go of the lamb. Ironically, in the process of letting go, the shepherd becomes aware that he is also a sheep, needing additional comfort and support in the Master's flock. I have seen members of the flock help to ease the anguish and pain of those who need to let go. We can all quietly stand by such friends, provide physical and verbal comfort, listen, recall positive aspects of the situation, and focus upon what is "right" with their lives.

Sometimes we will be the shepherd; sometimes we will be the sheep. Unquestionably, there will be times when we must leave the flock to try to bring back the lost lamb. Frequently, these efforts will be successful, as they were for Sean and his mother. There will also be times when our endeavors to locate the lost sheep and return him to the fold will result in temporary failure or that rescue will defy us altogether. Ron's future does not provide much promise.

Surely, when our efforts are obstructed we need not plunge into seclusion or total despair. If we have done all that we can reasonably do, then perhaps our final option is to "let go and let God." We cannot lose sight of hope, but when we have done all that is possible, we can ultimately surrender the problem to our own Shepherd. ■

GOD FOR \$ALE

Kira Pratt Davis
Takoma Park, Maryland

I just got back from the Profi-Mart, the little grocery store up on the Keizerstrait—a bit farther than I had intended to run when I started out this afternoon; it's bitter cold. I had my funny brown plastic ski parka on and two scarfs, one wrapped around my head and one around my neck. I'm sure I looked very odd. No one in Holland wears ski parkas, and no one here wears things over their ears either, even in the most bitter weather. It felt good to run, though, after nearly all day inside. My face soon numbed, and the cold crept through my scarf and my hair and along my scalp, but pounding along, pumping my arms, breathing hard, I was warm enough.

It was ten years ago this month that I got my mission call to come to this place—January 1977. I had just turned twenty-one. Sometimes I like to imagine what I would have thought then if I could have seen myself now: living here again because of my husband's job, having a child in a Dutch hospital, shopping in Dutch grocery stores, talking to people and making friends with people who never would have spoken to me, who would have slammed their doors on me, who would have sneered and turned away from me on the streetcar when I was a missionary. When I was out jogging, I stopped a woman to ask her where the post office was. People just love to be helpful.

I jogged up the street to the little grocery store, put my guildier into the little slot, and got out my grocery cart. I passed with it through the turnstile and was making my way down the aisle full of coffee and sugar and cookies when I saw a man I thought I remembered meeting once when I was tracting in this city almost ten years ago.

He had a blunt nose and sharp eyes, with a wry expression about the mouth. He wore glasses with no rims, only gold wire bands back to the ears and across the nose. Plain brown hair, wispy now—I remember it fuller then. And he was more wrinkled now too, if it really were him, which it probably was not. After all these years, it was far too coincidental. But if it were him, he seemed less absolute, less unforgiving and harsh than he did to me in the five minutes or so of our first encounter.

**"HE ASKED WHY WE
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MANNER."**

It had been in late November. We were in a threesome—Sister Johnson, Sister Boot, and I. Sister Johnson was 23, had long shiny brown hair, and was worried about being old when she got home from her mission. On our way home from tracting, we used to sing together as loud as we could. Sister Boot was a Dutch woman born and raised here in The Hague, had immigrated with her family to the States, and had been sent back here again on her mission at fifty-eight. She was round and smily and dimpled, spoke a blend of Dutch and English, and could never be mad at anybody—could maybe scowl comically for a second or two, but the expression would not stick. It was as if her muscles had never been trained to hold such a stance, and she would be smiling and dimpling and chuckling like a jolly plump quail, even in the rain, even when someone spat at us, even when she once fell off her bicycle. But I remember after this encounter even Sister Boot felt too strained to smile.

**"HE SAID THAT THE
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WAS THE MCDONALD'S
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A YOUNG WOMAN ASKED
HIM WHAT HE WAS DOING.
'THESE LADIES ARE TRYING
TO SELL ME GOD.'"**

We were tracting in the neighborhood right next to the woods along the shore. Across the street from the row of houses that we were tracting, the downs began, brown and tangly with wild roses and tufts of dry yellow grass. It was still quite early in the day. I think we had only knocked on the doors of two or three houses, getting the usual firm but relatively polite refusals, perhaps even a laugh or two when we said, referring to the imposing presence of all three of us on a little front porch, "Hello. We're an invasion from the Mormon Church." But this fellow did not laugh, perhaps he smiled slightly, standing above us there, on his top step. I remember that I felt encouraged and went on for a few sentences saying that we were representatives of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and that we had an important message for him and his family. Did he have a family? He held a newspaper in his hand, standing there in the doorway. I think he said, "No." And because he did not directly stop me, I went on. Was he a religious person? Did he think belief in God was important for people today? He smiled and nodded. I thought he was friendly, and he was good-looking—late twenties, I thought—bright and hard looking, like a law student. And then he asked why we thought we were the only ones in the world with the truth and why we had to go presenting it in this obscene manner. He got started and then the words came out faster and faster through his teeth, biting into us with every word. Americans were the most cocky, conceited people on Earth and were poisoning the cultures of the world with their crassness—crass clothes, crass and moronic television, and crass and money-grabbing religions. He said that the crowning achievement of American culture was the McDonald's hamburger. A young woman with her arms full of grocery bags came up the step just then, and she gave us a disgusted look and asked him what he was doing. "These ladies are trying to sell me God." She groaned at him and went in with the groceries.

I don't remember what we said back to him, but I remember that it was desperate and flailing and utterly, utterly ineffectual, like the tickling of a fly on an ogre's nose. I wanted to hit him. So did Sister Johnson. He seethed and, yet, didn't lose control, skewering us deftly. It was cold-blooded; it was pure hate; it was evil. I think we dusted off our feet as we left, flustered and stung and red-faced, Sister Johnson and I. Sister Boot had turned pale and moved off the porch and turned away from him, creeping an inch at a time further down the front walk, frowning under her eyebrows. We finally turned away; I think Sister Johnson yelled back at him, as a parting shot, "You can be sure we'll never be back here again!" He sneered and closed the door. We were all three exhausted. I felt like I had struggled with someone trying to drown me. He had held my head under water in spite of my hitting and kicking and all that I could do, and I had begun to drown.

We didn't go on to the next door. We got back on our bikes and went home, crying. Back at our apartment, Sister Boot put her arms around us

both and said, "Let's haf a prayer," and so we did. And then I went upstairs to the room Sister Johnson and I shared, and I said my own prayer. I wanted to know if I were the only crazy person in the world; I wanted to know if it was worth it to be out here, spilling my guts out; I wanted to know what God thought of me—if I was really as worthless a piece of trash as this man had made me feel. And as I prayed, I did see myself; I saw a silly, vain, and intense person who had gone on a mission largely to prove that she wasn't just anybody. I saw how smart I thought I was. I saw myself posing and strutting, in my own way, for everyone, all the time. I cried, but at the same time, I felt a kind of solid earth beneath my soul, a bedrock reassurance that He regarded me kindly and saw all of what I was, but that it did not matter, as if his love were some low, constant droning, some pervasive humming, undisturbed by my falseness in the treble. It was a surprising answer. I had expected to be reassured that I was not all that bad; instead, I realized that I was all that bad but that God's feeling for me was not because I was good, but because He was good.

I ached for several days after this; I never even wrote about the experience in my journal. So when I saw that man in the grocery store today, I got a little nervous. Our eyes met, and I looked away—I hoped inconspicuously, undramatically—over at the rows of yogurt in the refrigerator section. I was afraid that he might recall my face from somewhere and talk to me, ask me where he knew me from—really a very unrealistic fear, given the Dutch penchant for keeping to oneself and leaving everyone else alone in the hope that one will be left alone, too. In this crowded little land where so much has to be shared, people guard their personal space. But just the same I was glad when he wasn't in my check-out line and didn't look my way again. He looked wise, if it were he; he looked weathered, perhaps less stringent in his views. I wondered. I am myself less stringent now and in many ways less sure than I was then—I doubt I could throw myself against the thorns so fiercely as I did then. I felt the man's presence behind me, checking out of his line across the store and then whisking his groceries to the loading up table, reparking his cart, and going out the door. I felt all of that behind me as I stood bagging up my own groceries, aware with my scalp and the roots of my hair. Then I gave my cart to a lady just coming in; she gave me the guildier "deposit," and I wrapped my scarves around my head again and jogged back home, my plastic grocery bag swaying heavily from my wrist. ■

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FINDING OUR WAY

Janna Pett DeLange
Boise, Idaho

"A boy? . . . A boy?"

I wasn't sure I had heard my husband right. I had given birth to a boy? I, an avowed feminist who had grown up one of four sisters, was supposed just to accept that my long-awaited, first-born baby was a boy? Still disbelieving, I unwrapped the minutes-old bundle wailing on my stomach. No doubt about it. In a moment's time, I had become the mother of a male child.

In the five years that have passed since that day, during which time we have been blessed with a second son, I have given a great deal of thought to the matter of raising boys. Oh yes, I had wanted a daughter passionately—to share sisterhood with, to raise free of all sexist stereotypes, to teach of her feminist foremothers, to help to reform her world, and so forth. And yet, over these years during which my little boys have become the light of my life, I've come to feel that perhaps my raising enlightened sons might, in fact, be every bit as great a gift to our society, to the Church, and to the women whom they will know as my producing independent daughters would be.

Raising sons is, for me, a challenge, a joy, and a balancing act. I come to the task from three distinct perspectives: that of a practicing, believing Latter-day Saint, that of a committed feminist, and that of an educator. Despite occasional tension between these viewpoints, I have found a surprising degree of convergence as I have struggled to formulate a philosophy of mothering focused on the goal of raising sensitive and committed sons who will someday establish relationships of equality with the women who will share their lives.

Perhaps there is little point in discussing the raising of boys versus girls. Certainly the daily activities that now fill our lives would be no different if I had girls, at least at this age: preschool, home school, library hour, walks, reading, bike rides, outings to the parks or the hills. And yet there is within me an awareness of a more subtle difference that may grow as my boys become older, an awareness that is not helped by the fact that I lack good role models of mother/son relationships. I had no brothers of my own to watch, and most of the mothers of teenaged boys whom I know have relationships with their sons that are distant at best. A part of me rejects the idea that such a scene is inevitable; surely not only mothers and daughters can share closeness beyond the childhood years. But I wish I could see some examples around me to validate that belief.

Thus, without a lot of models to follow, my husband, my boys, and I together feel our way in this quest. Like other believing Mormons, I hope with all my heart that my sons will embrace the gospel of Jesus Christ and choose to follow Him. So I tell them of the Savior's teachings, of the Restoration, and of my own faith. But as they grow, I will also share with them my belief that the traits that make a man masculine are the very same traits that make a woman feminine—specifically, the attributes of Christ Himself. Thus, at the same time as I nurture their testimonies, I feel the powerful need that I must



help them to be independent enough to handle the traditions they may encounter at Church—traditions that their father and I do not support. They will need the self-esteem and self-confidence to believe in themselves, to trust their own instincts, to ask the right questions in sincerity and humility, and to avoid blind acceptance of practices that have no basis in doctrine or faith. Knowing what is worth questioning and what is properly a matter of faith is a lifelong struggle for me, but I have a feeling that my sons will face such dilemmas earlier than I ever did. Already my five-year-old, without provocation, has asked, "Mom, do you have the priesthood power?" Caught off guard, the best I could manage was "Not yet," which was followed immediately by his impatient, "Well, when?"

Another area where balance is critical involves the whole issue of playthings and games and, more specifically, competition and aggression. We do not allow our sons to play with or own guns or violent toys, and we strictly limit their TV watching; they've never seen He-Man or G.I. Joe. I have found that it is imperative that I explain why we believe such toys are not appropriate—that war is never a game, never fun, that fighting is not the way to solve problems. I encourage them to talk out their feelings, and I try hard to discourage any judging of children who may play differently. Yet, I don't think it's desirable (and maybe not even possible) to eliminate all aggressive tendencies completely; so, when an occasional stick becomes a sword, I generally look the other way. They will grow up knowing what their parents' values were and, hopefully, those values will be an influence as they form their own.

My sons have both dolls and trucks around the house; they "cook" on their play stove as well as race to the rescue with their fire trucks. I searched

diligently to find a nursery school that discouraged violent or sexist play and specifically fostered cooperation. And yet, although they have been exposed to a non-sexist play environment from birth, my boys show an obvious preference for vehicles and dinosaurs over dolls and tea parties, leading me to modify somewhat my pre-motherhood assertion that "Any differences between the behavior of boys and girls is purely cultural!" Still, I believe it is best that they not separate into girl toys/boy toys or girls only/boys only play too soon. Secure in their own identities as boys or girls, there is still plenty they can learn from each other.

I believe it is important to avoid giving any prescribed messages about what boys and girls or men and women are, do, like, or can be. Through exposure to their parents and other adults, my children will soon form opinions about what it means to be male and female. I talk to them about Heavenly Mother as well as Heavenly Father; She is real to them. When we talk history, we talk of female as well as male figures. Because both my husband and I are devoted to making a home, we both consider ourselves homemakers. In our home, where I am presently (though not necessarily permanently) the at-home parent, we refer to

"Mommy's job" as well as "Daddy's job," and Mommy goes to work just as Daddy does each day. Roles in our home are not rigid, and chores are shared. We often tell our oldest of the time period when he was a baby and toddler and Daddy was the at-home parent. Although Mommy now cares for them during the day, Daddy makes the kids' oatmeal in the morning and puts them to bed at night, and it's he the boys cry out for when they have wet beds or bad dreams. One day my three-year-old said, "When I grow up I want my wife to go out to work so that my work can be with my kids."

Does a statement like that mean my boys will grow up confused about gender roles and responsibilities or even about their own identities? Can a long-time feminist really raise sons who will feel good about being male? As I do my best to raise them first as good persons—human beings, world-citizens—before defining them more narrowly as good boys (or Americans), am I unwittingly making the way more difficult for them, making them too different from their peers? Maybe I am, but there are no guarantees with any style of raising children. I believe that my sons will work it out. Yes, in this generation (especially in the Church), they are pioneers, experimental, a new breed. But they aren't alone, and their heritage is one of courage and faith. I believe that the Church needs men like the ones I hope to raise; yet, I also know that they are individuals every inch of the way and will not necessarily turn out in the image of the mold I have made for them. They may not end up working for peace or being champions of change in the Church. That is all right. If I can raise them to be caring and gentle—and if we can remain loving friends—that will be enough. ■

Dream of Autumn

Your hand comes up out of the earth,
fragile,
sinewy,
clutching air,
drawing your arm after.

Scorning burial songs of fallen leaves,
you stand.

An old man, feet in burial skins,
you totter to my door.

Each step sheds the past:
A stooped back straightens,
Strands of white darken,
Shuffled steps lengthen.

You reach my side.
We stand
face to face.

I wake
And your eyes fade before me.



Nicki Lynn Fortney
Billings, Montana



The Courting of Grandma

Grandest of grandfathers,
You show love to me
In deeds you may not know.

When you go exploring
Neighborhood with an adoring child
Clutching a single finger,
Finding seeds and whistle reeds,
You melt me completely.

Your hours, so generously spent
Reading Mother Goose
And Dr. Seuss, or playing games
Of Hide-and-Seek and "Peek"
With thigh-high youngsters
Are to me tokens of love
Sweeter than florist flowers.

It is sad
That smallest babes will not recall
Rhythmic cocoon of your long arms
When their whole bodies
Only spanned elbow
To arthritic hand,
But I know.

Did Isaac, as a lad,
Spend flute-carving time
With his Dad, Abraham?
Was he shown desert beauty?
Yet you accept
This tending duty as a prize!

More patiently than weary parents
You push a small swing
'gain and then 'gain.
No wonder when you seek my eyes
You find admiration.

You woo me
With your genuine joy
In our posterity.
You win me
Without Valentine or gift
Because you lift our little ones
In love.

Val Camenish Wilcox
Provo, Utah

I Never Cared Much for My Grandmother

I never cared much for my grandmother.
Her mouth was grim and she set her chin
And her touch was harsh as her thimble.

I never cared for her thick white gravy,
Pies with scarce enough sugar.

But when she died and lay in her bed
I stroked her head. And she knew it.

JoAnne Bergeson
Redlands, California

Tea Time at Hotel Utah

On a hot, sunny day, I walk
through the south door
into coolness of expensive elegance,
select an well-appointed chair,
idle beneath a canopy of crystal stars,
sip summer through a straw.
A pianist at a grand piano repeats
old love songs while waitresses
rising like petals from stems
of long, black skirts and
white embroidered blouses,
flutter to our bidding.

I close my mind to plump-upholstered women
in tight slacks, casual girls wearing
shorts and bare midriffs.
As if in a mirage, my pretty aunties
settle in soft chairs, retreat
into their delicate selves,
sip tea from dainty cups, always
holding the handles with proper
curve of gloved fingers.

Their calm eyes glitter in half-light,
silk clad ankles swinging to
inevitable rhythms of expectancy,
fragile slippers tapping out time.
I go back into a womb of yesterdays
where life seemed as easy as roses
gracing a crystal vase, and all
that matters for the moment is
quiet elegance of a raised teacup,
old songs, and old loves.

Helen Mar Cook
Ogden, Utah



old west

were it not for the bent withered man in the chair
the world of what was would never have been mine.
as it is it is and
green red blue brown and foamy white
mix to tell the wahoos and hearty wagons ho!

sweat and stench glare from baked desert
sunlit glint and frenzy of motion
frantic thirst—bustling ants
pick the already shining bones
of another who thirsted.

another season place experience
ear in the dirt
"buffler!"
from the crumbling figure
the thunder of countless hooves
is resurrected.
dim eyes see clear
past smudged windows.
he quakes.

white bleak alone
snow stings wind rips
vague numb ache
he bares boney blue veined foot where
two toe slots shine empty

and i was surprised when he stood
that he should be so short
the worlds his words created
were so grand—the tales so tall.

*Julie Paquette
Fort Worth, Texas*

Morning at Mountain Meadow

Take me to Mountain Meadow;
I want to watch the sun
Explode over the horizon like a shotgun—
Surely it will shine exquisite morning
On a thousand questions,
Illuminating the warwhoops of red men,
Washing palefaces, already ashen,
With reason.

I want to stand in the open plain.
Let morning reconcile the pain
And terror of fleeing children,
Let it scorch-down,
Bleaching the red dirt brown
At the scene of massacre
Where a scapegoat was brought,
Propped and dutifully shot
Two decades following.
Maybe morning there will help me see
How that resolved the tragedy
Of inexplicable horror.

Let morning bring her new-day magic
To this place
Of interminable night, erase
The hush of evil, awake
And warm this century-frozen hell—
Maybe sunrise can erupt dawn upon the shame
That hangs on the air
Like thick fleas in coyotes' hair,
Host howling pitch-darkness.

*Anita Tanner
Salt Lake City, Utah*



The Will of Lydia Wilson

A woman,
who had achieved a certain equality
with the hollow-cheeked man
dreaming on the stoop of my great aunt's rented
estate,
bent,
under night sky
of dull electric,
examined refuse...
dropping a dividend into her bag.
I stepped over an arm,
(cigarette clung to pale lips),
and entered.
The stairwell drifted up and down,
like the long thin tongue of a giant iguana,
its breath biting at my nose.

Climbing up,
I thought about the headstone,
casket,
tears that would have to be arranged;
opened the door.
Click. Shadows clung to lost elegance
as I walked towards the bedroom:
a couch, faded,
of thick, wood trim, dipping and rising,
against windows in brocaded curtains;
a table between high-back chairs;
walls of crowded sentiment.

Dear Richard:

It's been a time of passion
hung from a glance:
a lean, young man on a high-wheeler,
smiled, and tipped his bowler,
girl friends giggled along Riverside Drive,
the conceptions and misconceptions of generations
squeezed into a moment;
of Saturdays, waist deep in Coney Island swells,
hands half-hearted on the safety line—
falling against the boy next to me;
of thrill rides,
and five-cent hot dogs at Nathan's.
A time of roadhouses and speakeasies,
the Biltmore alive with Paul Whiteman and The
Rhythm Boys—

an evening ripe for memories,
of days without beginning ('though
I've heard relatives speak of it),
and fear:
time to watch a son, dressed for war,
stand proud,
read long-distant letters,
until they stopped;
lay his purple heart on a glass shelf.
I've run with generations
searching to kill a restless hunger
on simulated greenswards of miniature golf courses
and ferris wheels strung bright electric.
A time of "shocking intimacies": the bunny hug,
of motor cars (freedom-to-go),
nickels in the jukebox Friday night,
lindy hopping bars,
of great depression, (the arranged expression
on the last face of a tired husband)
and mild recessions.

And through it all,
except for my love,
I have nothing to leave
but a request:

When the time comes to lay me out
and dress me in a long white gown,
to wonder, "should I?"
(don't worry I'll wear a restful grin),
to say a word
and drop a fresh cut flower,
please make sure, before it's done,
I'm facing to the east.

For in a lifetime of decisions and endless revisions,
I've considered the north:
small fires burning in alleyways—the hearths of
hollow-men

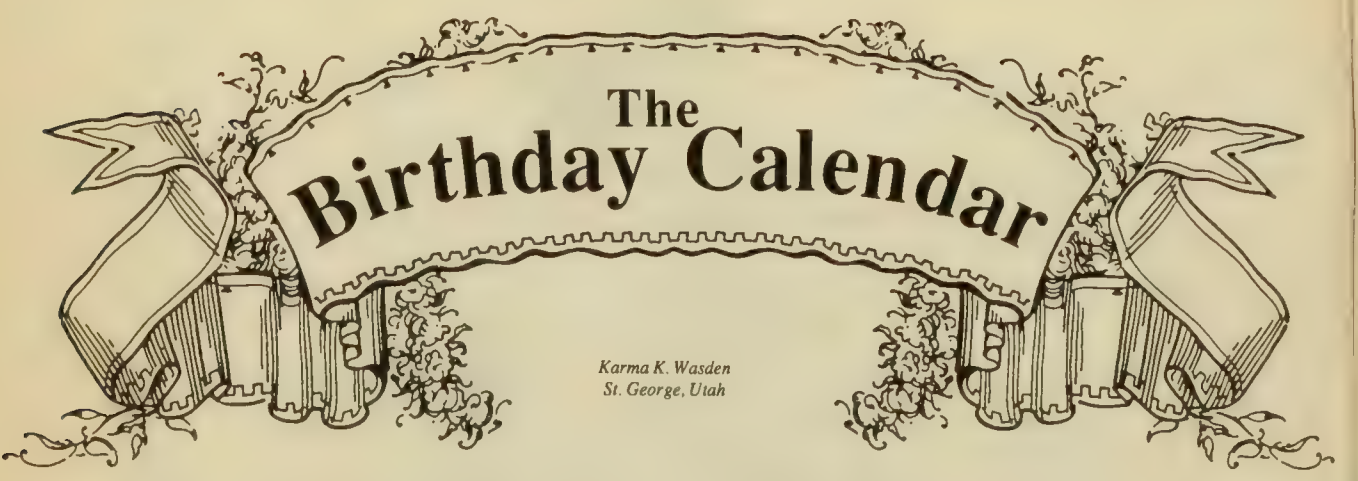
sipping wretched wines;
the south where faces, dressed for business,
stand
in
shallow
doorways,
with hardened smiles;
the west where girls in serge bathing suits,
and men dressed in dark woolen trunks,
sit and watch a bright-orange star
slip into the ocean—

never to be seen again;
and the east:
rough-cut faces running for buses and trains,
cold air steaming from their mouths,
stepping through revolving doors;
easily deceived by the significance
of decisions made from plush corner offices.
Restless, the sun blinking over the Atlantic.

In the end, however,
it is east or west,
(one can only live so long
in the ambiguity of the north;
the south's ambivalence).
So when the time comes to lay me out,
to chatter with a nervous priest,
please make sure, before it's done,
I'm facing to the east.

*R. Blain Andrus
Reno, Nevada*





The Birthday Calendar

Karma K. Wasden
St. George, Utah

I have marked today on her special calendar. Grandma Abbott never called it secret; she called it "special." She'd say, "Well, Janey, let's go look at the special calendar and see what we've got to celebrate this week."

My name is not Janey, it's Janeesa, but Grandma said I looked like her favorite sister. And she didn't hold with all these newfangled names; the old ones were good enough for her. I asked her if Artimacia wasn't a newfangled name, since she was the only one I had heard called that. But she said, "No, Janey, Artimacia is a very old-fashioned name." And she tilted her head as she smiled.

Grandma Abbott was my mother's grandmother. She lived in a little house behind Grandma and Grandpa Tilden's. It used to be a garage, but they fixed it all over with windows and carpet and everything. Grandma told me she was sad to leave her old house where she had lived all her married life, but she knew it was less worry for the family to have her close. And they did let her bring some of her things with her — some of the furniture that Grandpa Abbott sent her from Chicago, when he sold his first big herd, and some of the pretty things she had gotten over the years. Besides, she said, this way she had me.

I came to visit every day, and sometimes Mother let me sleep overnight. I guess Grandma Abbott was my very best friend. I'd come up from the back street, through the garden, past the fruit trees and the herb beds, and knock on her door. I could have walked right in, but it was more fun for both of us if I acted like company.

Grandma would answer the door and say, "Why, Miss Jane, my dear. What a surprise. How very nice to see you. Do come in and stay for a spot of tea." Sometimes it was lemonade, depending on the weather. Of course, she was not really surprised to see me at all; she knew I was coming. But with Grandma, pretending was half the fun.

When I brought her dandelions, she fussed over the bouquet. She'd look over all her vases until she had found the perfect one. She'd let me put the water in the vase and help her arrange the flowers. We'd turn the vase this way and that, admiring the blossoms. She'd hold them under my chin to see if I liked butter. Then she'd put the vase on her little walnut table Grandpa Abbott had given her, and say, "These are the most lovely *Taraxacum officinale* I have ever seen. You always bring me such exotic flowers. Did they come from your greenhouse? Or does your gardener grow them in the third-floor conservatory?" We always admired whatever I had brought her, before we had our tea party.

We had tea parties only when there was just two of us. If the weather was hot and we were having lemonade, I could choose between the tall pitcher with the curved green glass handle or the heavy cut glass that Grandma said was turning lavender from age. If we were having tea, she'd say, "Shall we use the rose-gold Spode tea service or the

Kinkozan?" I'd pick one, and she'd take the teapot down from the cupboard and warm it with water. She let me decide whether we were to have mint tea, from the mint we had gathered together, or raspberry leaf tea, in which she always put a dried raspberry or two, or ginger tea with real cream and lots of sugar. She'd slice the bread thin and let me butter it and cut it into any shape I wanted and pile it on a little plate. Then we'd sit down with our teacups and saucers and have tea and bread and butter. Grandma Abbott taught me to curl my little finger just so when I help the cut handle.

"You are going to make a very elegant lady," she said.

Once Grandma Tilden saw the teapots in the cupboard, and she said, "Mother, you might just as well give those old dishes to someone who'll use them since you don't anymore. There are lots of things around here you don't use that you could divide up and give to Amy or George or to me." She poked around in the cupboard and told Grandma Abbott it would save her from having so much to dust and take care of if she got rid of most of it. Grandma Abbott said she was rather used to seeing her things sitting there, and she'd miss them. When Grandma Tilden's back was turned, Grandma Abbott winked at me. Then I knew teatime was just for us.

If we saw Grandma Tilden walking down the flagstone path, Grandma Abbott quickly hid the tea things, and we sat on the couch not talking or anything. Then Grandma Abbott got so that she locked the door before we started tea.

"That way," she said, "no one can just walk in until we were ready to answer the door properly." She taught me how to drop a curtsy to welcome a guest and how to nod my head graciously. Grandma Abbott liked graciousness just as much as she liked elegance. She told me that being gracious, and elegant, and polite were part of being a real lady. "I will give you lessons," she said, "like I had." So Grandma locked the door, and when Grandma Tilden knocked on the door, we had time to clear up the tea things and get ready to open the door properly. Grandma Tilden got cross when she had to wait for Grandma to open the door. She'd scold Grandma Abbott. "What if there was an emergency? How could I help you? You've got to promise me you won't lock this door until I get another key made."

Grandma Abbott didn't say a thing. But I noticed that she put a screen hook at the top of her door. It was a little crooked but would hold. When I asked her about it, she answered, "Children can be so vexing sometimes, you know. Oh, I don't mean you, dear. You are not at all vexing."

Grandma Abbott had just about the whitest hair, and she always wore it fluffed out in front and in a bun behind. Sometimes she let me unwind the bun and make a million little braids that I wound around and around her head. And she would tell me about when she was a little girl. And she would give

me elocution lessons. She said a genteel lady speaks with grace and dignity, and she doesn't slur her words together. So we practiced articulating vowels and consonants and worked on inflection and modulation.

Once I heard Grandma Tilden tell my mother that she appreciated her letting me grandmasit, but she didn't know how I could stand spending so much time with the old lady; she was getting so forgetful and obstinate. Maybe it was just two little children communing with each other. Mother laughed and said she didn't know what we did, but it was a relief for her, also, although sometimes when I came home, I talked funny. Grandma Tilden asked her what she meant. And Mother said, "Well, sometimes Janeesa sounds like she is reading a script, and not just talking. Her words sound so rehearsed." But, she said, she guessed whatever it was we were doing up there, it kept both of us out of mischief. When I told Grandma Abbott, she laughed. We were playing games and having fun; the joke was on everyone else.

The winter I started school was the winter Grandma showed me the special calendar. The wind whipped the bare limbs of the lilac bushes against the window and made little scratching sounds. I thought it must sound loud in the house, making it hard for Grandma Abbott to hear because she was a long time answering the door. She said, "Oh, you surprised me, Janey. I didn't hear you. Or maybe I fell asleep and took a little nap."

She took her glasses off and rubbed her eyes; they were a little bit red. She looked at me and smiled. Then she shook her head. "No," she said. "I guess I can trust you, if I can trust anyone. I had to put things away in case it was your Grandma Tilden at the door."

She let me sit in the middle of her big four-poster bed that almost filled the small room. And then she lifted the large, heavy-framed picture of her and Grandpa Abbott in their wedding clothes, and underneath was a calendar, one of those kind that businesses give out for advertising. It had pictures of tractors and plows at the top with writing on it. Grandma took it down and helped me sound out the words, *Cox's Farm Equipment*.

"This is my special Birthday Calendar, Janey," Grandma said. It wasn't at all like the big felt birthday calendar we had hanging on the wall at home decorated with candles for birthdays and bells for weddings. Grandma had taken a marker and drawn a square around certain days and put a name inside the square. The squares were of blue and green. Two squares were always together — a blue square around a Tuesday, and then a green square around the following Friday or Saturday. The names inside were written in Grandma's curling handwriting that I couldn't read or even sound out. But I could tell that the names inside the blue square and the green square that followed it were the same. When I asked Grandma about it, she explained that

the blue square was the birthday and the green square was the birthday party.

She sat beside me on the bed and read the names to me. We went through the whole calendar. I asked who was coming to the birthday parties. She looked at me, drew her eyebrows together a little, and then she smiled and said, "Why don't we just invite the two of us? We have such lovely teas. We could make them our birthday celebrations." I told her it was fine with me but didn't she think we needed to have cake instead of bread and butter. Grandma looked like she was going to laugh, but instead she said, "I think you are entirely right. Birthday celebrations call for cake."

So it came about that every week we'd look at the special birthday calendar to see whose birthday we were going to celebrate. Sometimes it was one of Grandma's sisters. She said they were known as the Miller girls long after they were married, and they were the prettiest and the merriest girls in town, and everybody loved them. We celebrated her Mama's and her Papa's, and Aunt Golda's, and Aunt Charlotte's, and her best friend Emma Adelaide's. And Grandma Abbott drew figures that looked like trees to show me how I was related to all of them. We had wonderful celebrations, but Grandpa Abbott's was always the best.

She'd start just after Christmas. "Well, Janey," she'd say, "three more weeks till George's birthday. I want to have something very special for him. What do you think he'd like?" Her eyes would get a little cloudy, and I would wait because I knew what was coming. Suddenly she'd smile, "I know," she'd say, "we'll have strawberry shortcake. It is his favorite, and I always fix it for him on his birthday."

It was like that every year. I would go to the market with a note from her and pick up some strawberries from Mr. Mathis. I'd tell him that she wanted fresh berries, the biggest he had. And every year I'd come back with frozen strawberries. There were no fresh strawberries available in January. And every year she would say, "That young Mathis boy is ruining his father's business. I could always get fresh strawberries for George's birthday from Henry Mathis. Young people just are not as good at business as their elders. I cannot imagine what is wrong with him. He had an excellent mother. I knew her very well."

Mr. Mathis was older than my father, and he had his picture in the paper once because of some businessman's award, and Grandma Abbott was very disgusted. She said she was going to stop her subscription to the newspaper if Phillip Thompson's boy wasn't smart enough to not print things that were not true. She didn't, though, because Grandma Tilden brought the newspaper to Grandma Abbott every evening after Grandpa Tilden was through reading it.

I knew every year that Grandma Abbott would fuss about the frozen strawberries, but I bought them anyway. After she had spluttered a little, she would say, "Well, if that is the best we can do, I guess we'll have to do it. I always see to it that George has strawberry shortcake for his birthday." And then she'd say, "Did you remember the cream, the real heavy cream for whipping? I don't want any of this fake cream that young people use nowadays."

Once she got the shortcake made, and I had set the tea table just how she liked it, she would stop her fussing, and we would have a lovely birthday celebration. Sometimes she pretended that I was Grandma Abbott. After a few years, I learned not to say much during Grandpa Abbott's birthday party. Once we sat down, Grandma's eyes would get dreamy, and she would carry on a conversation with herself or with someone I couldn't see.

She'd say, "George Abbott, I saw you winking at Emma Adelaide Pierce at the cotillion Friday night. If you don't behave, I'll not keep company with you again." And then she would smile at her hands. Or she would say, "Yes, George, you may call me Artie if you don't let my mother hear you. She said she named me *Artimicia* because

that was what she wanted me to be called. No one else in the whole world can call me Artie but you." And she'd pat her lips with the linen napkin and blush a little bit and smile. And for the rest of the party, she'd seem like she was somewhere else. After we'd do up the tea things, she would give me a hug and say, "Maybe you had better run along home, Janey; I have a lot of thinking to do today."

It got so that Grandma Abbott seemed far away and dreamy a lot of the time. Still, she was my best friend, and I went to see her every day. And we always had a tea party or a birthday party. And she always knew who I was, although Grandma Tilden told Mother that Grandma Abbott didn't always know her and how that almost broke her heart. And sometimes she wouldn't talk to Grandma Tilden or Aunt Amy either. She'd just stare at the window or the wall. But she always talked to me, if no one else was around.

Last month, we were chatting about school, and Grandma Abbott was telling me about the time that young George Abbott had made her cry. He'd pulled her braids and said, "Artie, Artie, thought you were a smarty." She had stomped her feet and told him no one could call her that. We were laughing together, when Grandma looked at the window and suddenly stopped laughing. I looked up as Mother walked past the window. She had come up through the garden.

I opened the door for Mother.

"Hello, Grandma Abbott," Mother said, as she kissed Grandma on the cheek. Grandma Abbott didn't answer. "Are you two having a good visit?" Mother asked. I nodded my head. But Mother wasn't looking at me; she was looking at Grandma. Grandma pretended that Mother wasn't there.

Mother talked about the weather, and the family, and what she had read in the newspaper. She asked Grandma what good things she was going to fix for dinner. Grandma didn't say anything. She just sat very still and looked out the window.

On the way home, Mother said, "Did I hear you and Grandma Abbott laughing?"

And I said, "Yes."

And she said, "What were you laughing about?"

I looked at the garden and wondered how much I should tell, and I guessed a little bit wouldn't hurt. So I told her we had been talking about Grandpa Abbott.

Mother said, "Why wouldn't Grandma talk to me?"

I thought about it for a while, and then told her I didn't know.

Mother was quiet for a minute, and then she said, "Does Grandma talk about Grandpa very much?"

And I said, "Sometimes."

Mother was quiet again, and then she said, "I wish you could have known him, Janeesa. He was a very wonderful man. He and Grandma always did nice things for everyone. And they were especially thoughtful of each other. I remember that Grandma always bought the very first strawberries in June for Grandpa's birthday. He loved strawberry shortcake.

"His birthday is in January," I said.

"No, dear, his birthday was in June,"

Mother said.

"Grandma said his birthday is in January."

I guessed I knew.

Mother said, "Oh, I hadn't realized that she was getting so confused. Perhaps you shouldn't go to see her so often."

I was still certain that Grandpa Abbott's birthday was in January; so when we got home, Mother got out her big genealogy book and showed me.

"See," Mother said, "my grandfather was born the twelfth of June and died the sixteenth of January. Grandma Abbott just has the months mixed up, probably because they both begin with a *J*. I'd better tell your Grandma Tilden how befuddled she is getting." And she reached for the phone. I didn't

think Grandma was confused. But something was wrong, and I didn't know what.

I went to see Grandma the next day. She said she didn't feel like making tea, and if it was all right with me, she would just pour us some milk to drink with some cupcakes that a neighbor had brought. That was the first time she hadn't make tea or lemonade for me. Grandma didn't say much while we ate our cake. Finally, I took a big breath and said, "Grandma, Mother says Grandpa Abbott's birthday is in June and not in January. Is it?"

Grandma didn't move; she just looked at me. Then she looked out of the window for a while. When she looked back at me, her voice was very quiet, and she asked, "Why did your mother say that, Janey? What were you talking about?"

I said, "Mother wanted to know what we were laughing about, and I told her you were telling me about Grandpa Abbott."

"What did your mother say about that?"

Grandma was watching me very carefully.

"Mother said you always had strawberry shortcake for her Grandpa's birthday in June, and I told her it was in January."

Grandma Abbott frowned a little and wrinkled her forehead. She leaned forward and looked right into my eyes, and very slowly she said, "Did you tell her about the birthday calendar?"

"Oh, no, Grandma," I said. "I thought that was just for us."

"And so it is, Janey," Grandma said and nodded her head, and her face looked sad. She didn't say anything more; she just sat looking out the window.

Finally, I said, "Grandma."

And she answered, "Yes, Janey?" But she didn't look at me.

So I said, "When is Grandpa's birthday?"

Grandma turned and faced me. She smiled just a little and said, "We celebrated the right day, Janey. Some birthdays are more important than others." She didn't say anything else for a minute or two. Then she patted my hand and said, "I'm a little tired. You run on home. I think I'll lie down and rest a bit."

On the way home, I leaned my back against an apple tree and looked at the garden. I felt as if I had broken something precious, like Grandma's Spode teapot. I felt as lonely as if I had been chosen last for a game. It hurts to be last.

Grandma didn't get out of bed any more.

And she wouldn't talk to anyone, even me, except to say a loud "No" when Grandma Tilden and Uncle George wanted to take her to the hospital.

Last week, I took Grandma a big bouquet of lilacs from our bush. She was lying very still in the big bed, her eyes partly closed. I put the flowers in a vase, and then I sat by her on the bed and held her hand. All at once she sat up. "The lilacs smell wonderful, my dear Miss Jane," she said. "Did you bring them for the birthday party? They look quite festive."

She looked at everyone in the room — at Grandma Tilden, at Aunt Amy, and at Mother. She smiled at them. Then she looked at me and said, "Janey, my new white party dress is hanging in the closet. Kiss me good-bye. I have to go. Young George Abbott has come to take me to my birthday party."

I have her special calendar now. I have drawn a blue square around April nineteenth, and a green square around April twenty-second, and in the center of each square I have written *Artimicia Abbott*. ■

About the War

Emma Lou Thayne
Provo, Utah

January 31, 1991

At noon on January 15, I was reading peace poems at a pray-in on the steps of the Utah State Capitol. The next afternoon, war broke out. Ever since then, now two weeks and two days ago, I have wanted to write about what the end of peace has meant. Except for one brief poem, I have been unable. The inertia of shock to my spiritual and emotional systems, together with physical post-surgery shock to my eye and cheek, have made me different. I cannot focus to see or put my face down to write. And without writing, I never quite know where I am. So, when my daughter allowed me to read the following that she had written about her state of being that matched mine so well, I was grateful. In fact, I felt sustained, rescued, knowing that, as with many others, she was saying it for me. Only this time, I had a sense of continuity and calm not then available anywhere else. This was one of my daughters unconsciously carrying on what I felt and believed and wanted so deeply to see preserved. I submit her view as mine in a time of my own restive muteness.

January 18, 1991

Rinda T. Kilgore
Lake Oswego, Oregon

I am nobody special. I am just somebody who loves flowers and fir trees and stars at night. I love playing with children and listening to beautiful music. I love the human touch, rubbing the back of a child, holding an old woman's hand, hugging a friend or my husband. I've always loved waking up, and I've always loved going to sleep.

But now, I enjoy neither. If I'm able to sleep at all, I awaken with a knot in my stomach and an aching in my heart and with a throat choked with fear.

"Why are you so devastated by this war?" many ask. "You don't even have a relative or friend in the Gulf." "You're safe. Your children are safe; so, why are you so upset?" "Life goes on. You just need to learn to detach yourself."

My mind and heart cannot grasp what they are saying. Go on with life? Act like nothing's changed? How can I do this when my whole soul vibrates with moral outrage? How can I carry off this charade when my heart bleeds for my fellow humans over there? Is it not supposed to matter because it hasn't directly affected me? Are we really supposed to swallow any sense of connection to those humans? My mind cannot get around this. In no way can I make any of these pieces seem to fit. Life for me has suddenly taken on a bizarre, surreal quality to it that I can't seem to grasp, and it seems even more bizarre and surreal because so many people act like this is normal.

Do you mean there is something wrong with me because I find it hard to leave the horror of newscasters in gas masks and go to my son's basketball game as though nothing has changed? There is something wrong with me because I'm not awed and intrigued with the mind-boggling technology involved in our attack? Aren't I an American? Don't I support the troops?

Where in the world can I relocate myself in a world that to me seems to be unraveling with such paradoxes and reeling with such lack of control? Although the general feeling is "business as usual," I suddenly don't recognize anything around me, for in my mind all has changed, everything has been altered by the unleashing of the war machine.

And deep inside I know that my soul, my human mind and heart and deepest essence are saying "No" to this war. It is because I care so deeply about those troops, all of them, that I know so surely that they must come home. I cannot buy the argument given by most of the males in my life that says, "There is no other way to solve this problem." In human outrage, I say, "No!" With every downed

plane goes somebody's dreams and aspirations, somebody's son, somebody's lover, somebody's future, somebody's hope. There has simply got to be a better way to solve problems in the twentieth century. And I know above all else that we need to teach our children to be problem solvers, not war makers. That in a world as infinitely complex and intertwined as ours, we *must*, above all else, learn to talk and to listen.

Yes, I know that Saddam is a madman out of control. Yes, I realize he cannot be left unchecked. I do not need to be told in condescending terms that my opinion is naive and ill-informed. I simply need to state that I know there *must* be another solution. I am not a Middle East expert, and I don't know what that solution could be, but I believe in my heart of hearts in what Ghandi said—that answering violence with violence only breeds more violence and never fosters real solutions.

And yes, I am proud to be an American. Forgive me if I am not proud of the Patriot missiles or the Stealth bombers. I am unable to feel pride in weapons of destruction. I feel my sense of pride in America when I see people reaching out to each other, digging deep for solutions and understanding. I feel pride when I see many of us coming to grips with the hard realities of life, refusing to live in a world of complacent denial. I feel pride when I see us open our children's eyes to a far bigger picture of the world. And regardless of how I feel about war, I do feel proud of the men and women that are willing to put their lives on the line for the principles upon which our country was founded. My politics will never affect the way I feel about our service people.

And most of all, I must remember that if there is to be peace on earth, it really must begin with me; that I must make our home a home of peace; that I cannot let my anger, my frustration, my helplessness destroy the loving side of me; that I cannot let my politics sour my relationships or hamper my understanding and respect for another point of view. By the very nature of our name,

ABIGAIL

Laurel Ulrich
Durham, New Hampshire

This essay is for Abigail Carr, age three. She is a sturdy little girl with serious eyes under brows as dark and definite as a grownup's. Her wayward pigtailed require six barrettes, in various colors. Abigail's older brothers—Benjamin, Abraham, and Isaac—have similar cowlicks, though theirs have been tamed with crew cuts. Their dad, who is a university professor, says his colleagues think he named his sons for Benjamin Franklin, Abraham Lincoln, and Isaac Newton. The boys know better.

Abigail, too, will soon know her Biblical heritage if she doesn't already. This is a scripture-reading family.

Yet, the boys' names came to the parents with a surer sense of recognition than the girl's. Parents who had been raised as Latter-day Saints didn't need a concordance to identify Abraham and Isaac. A father who had performed as a child in the Hill Cumorah Pageant knew King Benjamin even if it took him a moment to remember the Old Testament Benjamin who was Joseph's brother. Yet, when Abigail's mother, thinking of the girl she hoped to have, first heard a still, small voice (the Holy Ghost? the child herself?) whisper *Abigail*, she didn't know the name was Biblical.

I first discovered the Biblical Abigail fifteen years ago when I was researching Puritan sermons. Most of the members of my Gospel Doctrine class met her for the first time today. When I presented them with a list of David's wives, everyone knew

Bathsheba. Several remembered Michal. Only one or two, primed by last week's supplementary reading assignment, knew Abigail, a woman whose story is told in rich detail in I Samuel 25. That chapter was omitted from the Gospel Doctrine study guide this year. I decided to teach it anyway. There are so few fully developed female characters in the scriptures, I'm not willing to omit even one. Abigail is worth remembering.

I Samuel 25 begins by introducing Nabal, a man wealthy in sheep and goats but "churlish and evil in his doing," and his wife Abigail, "a woman of good understanding, and of a beautiful countenance." Nabal's churlishness soon gets the family into deep trouble. When David, who is feeling the wrath of Saul, sends for provisions, Nabal pretends not to know who he is, though his comment that "there be many servants nowadays that break away every man from his master" is probably an intentional slur on David's breach with his "master" Saul. Nabal is obviously a man who sees the world from the top down.

When David learns of Nabal's rebuke, he is so angry he tells his men to gird on their swords and prepare to take revenge on Nabal's house, at least the male portion of it: "So and more also do God unto the enemies of David, if I leave of all that pertain to him by the morning light any that pisseth against the wall." The New English Bible cleans up the translation a bit but loses the macho character of the threat by rendering it, "God do the same to me and

more if I leave him a single mother's son alive by morning!"

Enter Abigail. When a servant warns her of David's plan, she takes immediate action, loading up her asses with "two hundred loaves, and two bottles of wine ['two skins of wine' in The New English Bible], and five sheep ready dressed, and five measures of parched corn, and an hundred clusters of raisins, and two hundred cakes of figs." Intercepting David, Abigail prostrates herself on the ground and offers her gifts, compensating for her husband's ill manners by her own graciousness and generosity. (Lest anyone think of this as a particularly feminine mode of dealing with conflict, think of Jacob's reconciliation with Esau in Genesis 33.)

Nabal saw the world in hierarchical terms. As long as Saul was king, he was unwilling to support the outlaw David. Like many men foolishly loyal to superiors, Nabal treated his own subordinates with contempt. His servant was afraid to go to him with bad news "for he is such a son of Belial, that a man cannot speak to him." In contrast, Abigail was able to see through the outward trappings of earthly authority. When necessary, she called herself to an important duty, knowing better than to ask her churlish husband for permission. Like the Prophet Samuel, she knew that "the Lord seeth not as man seeth." (I Samuel 16:7) Like him, she also had the courage to instruct a king.

In her long speech to David (I Samuel 25:24-31), she doesn't simply beg for mercy, she

Americans, we are blessed with differences and those differences must always be allowed to be honestly expressed.

And although I feel uncertainty and fear shutting down my world around me, I must answer back, "No." No, Saddam Hussein. Although your words and your eyes make my blood run cold, I will not let your terror ruin my life. I will not let you and the prevailing sickness and evil make me unable to respond gently to a child, or relish a sunset. I will not and must not let your madness tarnish my hopes for the future or my love of my fellow beings. I will not allow this to happen!

Martin Luther King, Jr., said that fear could be a powerful creative force if channeled in the right direction. It was fear of ignorance that created education. It was fear of darkness that created electricity. I hope that our fear of Saddam Hussein—and, yes, we may as well admit that we are afraid—will help us connect with that light of creative power to help us find solutions to the complex problems of today. And most of all, I want to remember the words of the Peace Prayer of St. Francis of Assisi:

Lord, make me an instrument of peace.
Where there is hatred, let me sow love.
Where there is doubt, faith
Where there is despair, hope
Where there is darkness, light
Where there is injury, pardon . . .

Martin Luther King, Jr., defined courage as the "power of life to affirm itself in spite of life's ambiguities." May we send this courage along with our love and peace to all those abroad.

It is my earnest hope that we as free Americans can reach out to each other to build bridges of strength and understanding and send to the Gulf our collective hopes, prayers, cosmic energy (or whatever you want to call it), to help them find peace, even if the only peace we can find is peace in our hearts and theirs. ■

January 20, 1991

6:45 A.M.

Emma Lou Thayne

WAR

Where are we?
The world has gone out of my heart
and taken it along.
Death flies sorties like fireworks over Baghdad
And mothers mask their children in Jerusalem
for when it comes,
The underbelly of a new world order
Delivering no longer by hand.

At home we telephone each other
As each "too late" explodes
And what we pray for, like an ancient slogan,
Is undecipherable in the signals
of jammed radar
and targets on fire.

Mother, we always called you
Leaving or coming back
To say we were safe
and unconfounded.
And Father, you were always there somewhere
Counting chances for a not impossible future.

How is it possible not to feel responsible
For the woman and her generations in the Bedouin tent
Or the pilot from North Carolina gone up in flames
over the desert?

Not to curry the favor of sleep
when only the connectedness of prayers
can open the skies
to drown the sirens
and unclog the heart
and re-chart the world
screaming in the night?

recalls him to a sense of his own mission, gently reminding him that he is not an ordinary warrior but a man with a destiny, a man who should be above petty revenge. Prophesying that he will live to rule Israel, she urges him to recognize his grievance with Nabal for the small thing it really is. (Here I really do like The New English translation better.)

When the Lord has made good all his promises to you, and has made you ruler of Israel, there will be no reason why you should stumble or your courage falter because you have shed innocent blood or given way to your anger.

What is even more remarkable, Abigail's little sermon worked.

And David said to Abigail, Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, which sent thee this day to meet me: And blessed be thy advice and blessed be thou, which has kept me this day from coming to shed blood, and from avenging myself with mine own hand.

I think of Abigail as an ancient-day Emma Lou Thayne, a woman sent to teach the world peace. Practical and visionary at the same time, she shared the abundance of her storehouse and her heart.

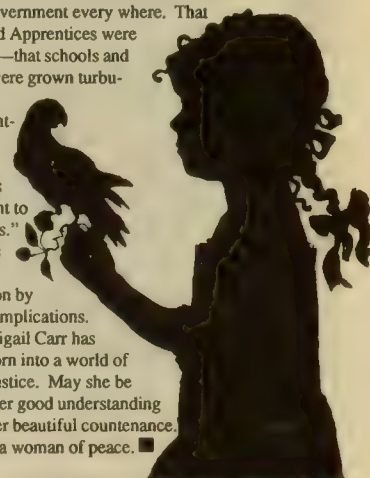
Abigail's story also reminds us that the Bible is a potentially subversive document. No wonder kings and priests have always been afraid of letting the people read it, at least without proper guidance from those in charge. Samuel's books can be bent into a celebration of anointed power, but a reader has to ignore a lot to interpret it that way. David's unification of the kingdom at Jerusalem was a fleeting triumph, a fragile and momentary union of political and spiritual authority. He soon looked down from his palace onto Uriah's rooftop. One of my class members wondered if David's acceptance of Abigail's advice had as much to do with her beautiful face as her wise words. I prefer a less cynical interpretation. As long as David was dependent on God for his survival, he was able to listen as well as look.

I don't know if Abigail Carr's father has ever been asked if he named his daughter for Abigail Adams. I suspect not. Most people know as little about women in American history as about women in the Bible. It occurs to me that the eighteenth-century Abigail had a lot in common with her Biblical predecessor. She was not shackled with a "churlish" husband, but she did have an absent one, and as a consequence, she had to deal with many of the emergencies of war on her own. She also had the capacity to understand the dangers of kingship. She had listened to her husband John and other patriots talk about the political relationship between the American colonies and Great Britain, and for one

brief moment in 1776, she urged John to "Remember the Ladies." Like Samuel before her and Joseph Smith after, she reminded him of the dangers of unlimited power, "for all men would be tyrants if they could."

John laughed. He assured Abigail that her female charms gave her all the power she needed. Despite his affection for Abigail, he was less willing to listen to her than to the Nabals around him: "We have been told that our Struggle has loosened the bands of Government every where. That Children and Apprentices were disobedient—that schools and Colleges were grown turbulent—that Indians slighted their Guardians and Negroes grew insolent to their Masters." John Adams preserved his revolution by denying its implications.

Abigail Carr has also been born into a world of war and injustice. May she be known for her good understanding as well as her beautiful countenance. May she be a woman of peace. ■



Ruminations on Mother's Day

Patt O'Neill
Denham Springs, Louisiana



I have just returned from a Mother's Day sacrament meeting, angry and tumbling with other feelings as yet unidentifiable; hence, this furious typing on a lazy Sunday afternoon. Mother's Days have bugged me for several years, but the reasons elude me still, despite my attempts to put my finger on why.

Some reasons prod only slightly annoyingly at my tender, sensitive spots. One is that I am divorced and childless, and though I would wish my situation to be otherwise, I do not despair of life because it is not. Nor do I resent those who have been mothers. Mine has been a full and fulfilling life, spent as most Christians spend their lives—attempting to come unto Christ. Neither do I resent the acknowledgment of mothers. As a matter of fact, I participate gladly in the ritual card choosing and gift giving to honor a wonderful lady. But, at the same time, I hope I honor her every day.

As Mother's Day approached this year, I began to stew about how to deal with the inevitable sacrament meeting. Should I skip church? Should I get someone else to lead the singing and leave after the sacrament? I hadn't as yet decided when I was invited to sing for the meeting. "Here is my chance," thought I, "to continue my crusade for meaningful Mother's Day songs." So I chose "The Crucifixion" by Samuel Barber, which ends—"Ah, sore was the suffering borne by the body of Mary's Son. But sorer still to Him was the grief, which for His sake, came upon His mother." (Despite my pioneering efforts, the trite ditties continue to be sung,

rendered sweetly by the children of the primary. And everyone loves them, and I smile and enjoy them, too. Yet, why do I hate it at the same time?)

It is always difficult for me to sit at the end of the meeting, when the mothers are asked to stand and each receives a gift as a token of her motherhood. Yet, at the same time, I don't begrudge them this innocent, guileless acknowledgment of their motherhood, and I honor them myself. This year I had resolved to leave early, before the gift-giving, but it was done before the closing hymn, and because I lead the singing, I was trapped. Somehow I got through conducting "Love at Home" and left quickly, vowing in my mind never to attend church again on Mother's Day.

Almost immediately after the meeting, two friends came by my home, each attempting in her own way to reach out to me and acknowledge my pain, both bearing *the gift* that had been given to each of the mothers. I loved them for that, though I fear one of them left a little frustrated because I didn't seem to feel better. I remember one year, in an attempt at "sensitivity," all women were presented with a gift. That year I just felt patronized.

So then, is this just something I have to learn to live with, or is there a need in me—and I suspect in other women as well (mothers or no)—that is not being met by Mother's Day celebrations?

As I sit here and ponder that last question, my thoughts have turned to Mother Earth, who holds within her atmosphere all those elements that make existence possible for all living things; yet, surprisingly, she is not considered to be alive herself. In her soil, she holds the tiny droplets that are the life blood to the seedling. As the youthful shoot gropes for life, it must struggle through that resistant earth, while somehow determining the direction of the sun. How marvelous. As the earth nurtures our existence, it can also be our greatest resistance to growth! Our cradle can just as well be our tomb, and one day most assuredly will be. For the most part, Mother Earth is kind to her children, and in her rare displays of whimsy, it is hard to say whether she is fickle or merely a victim, herself, of man's insensitivity.

This view of Mother Earth is how I wish to view my own role as a mother; for despite my childlessness, I am a mother. Mother Earth, who gave me life and breath, has merely resounded "Yes"

to the Mother of my spirit, who has said, "It shall be so!" And in my sojourn here I have been both nurtured and victimized by Mother Earth, and I have struggled to see the Sun/Son. Like Mother Earth, I have carefully nurtured and capriciously destroyed, and I have groaned under the weight of my weakness and imperfection.

I am woman! Her very essence and nature. It has been decreed that it shall be so! And only I can prevent myself from attaining the noblest measure of womanhood.

I am a human being in whom is some definition that knows no boundaries of sex. It has always been so! My selfhood, that most ancient part of me, I cherish above all others and would understand. This essence cries out in me for revelation and expression. My motherhood and womanhood can only be fully expressed through my selfhood, not the other way around! I choose to be like my Heavenly Mother, but not exactly like her.

This was my anger and frustration with our Mother's Day celebration. My "non-conforming" self was screaming out in me for validation. And like Mother Earth and all destined to dwell upon her soil, this self must pale before the cross of Christ and be born again to its ultimate definition.

So what of Mother's Day? On this day I choose to honor all women, including myself. And because I am offspring of my earthly mother, Mother Earth, and my Heavenly Mother, I shall offer thanks to them all for their gifts to me. ■



Someone's Mother, Someone's Daughter

Linda Stapley
Mesa, Arizona

Today is Mother's Day, the one day a year that we set aside to honor one of the most important people in our lives. One day a year seems grossly inadequate, but mothers are used to being short-changed. When a child has a problem or fails, it's usually the mother who takes the responsibility or the blame.

There is no way to be someone's mother without being someone's daughter. Some of what my mother did I have chosen not to do, but some of what she did is imprinted on me so deeply it will survive in my children. This imprinting—transferring ideas, habits, and beliefs from generation to generation—intrigues me. It is much like a box of pastels; in one row, the first piece is turquoise, the last yellow. But the colors change smoothly and gradually from turquoise to yellow. If you hold any two pieces up, they are much alike, just different shades. Where does the blue turn to purple and the purple to green and the green to yellow. It takes twenty-one pastels for turquoise to turn to yellow without any significant difference between any two that rest side by side.

My husband Jack has often said, "Why are you doing that? You're acting just like your mother." I have thought about that and the last few

years have been able to say, "And why shouldn't I act like her? I spent lots of time under her influence."

My mother was born in Texas, the oldest of ten children. Her parents were farmers, Southern Baptists, and poor. When Mom graduated from college, she weighed ninety-eight pounds and was 5'7" tall. She had put herself through the four-year nursing program at Hardin Simmons while working nights to support herself and pay for her education.

After World War II, when she'd been an Army nurse looking for a new start, she moved to Coolidge to stay with some friends. A few years later, she married a young and very indebted farmer. My dad (twenty-seven years old), the most eligible bachelor in town (he says), had just drilled four dry wells, owed \$120,000, and was having trouble getting financing. Mom says she had a job with a regular salary, and so she looked very attractive. Dad answers back that he intended on living on way more than a nurse's salary. Anyway, they were married, and three years later, my story began—though really my story started long before in Abilene, in west Texas.

My mother is a person of innumerable interests and seemingly inexhaustible energy. She loves gardening and can grow anything. My parents' house always blooms with flowers everywhere. I

think my love of (passion for) gardenias came from Mom putting bowls of them in my room during the night and while I was at school.

Mom could sew better than anyone I've ever seen. She sewed like a professional and was a perfectionist. Her cataracts now hinder her a lot, but I still find myself calling her to find out how to do it.

Both my parents are very generous—and mostly unnoticed except by the recipient. They don't do it for medals, awards, or honor but because they are human beings who see other human beings with needs for which they could provide.

My mother wrote the scripture "Cleanliness is next to Godliness," or so we girls thought. You had to move the furniture when you vacuumed (every time), wear clean underwear at all times in case of an accident, never go to bed with the kitchen a mess, have the house clean before you went anywhere because if you were in an accident and "they" had to come in...

One thing I'm most grateful for is that she raised us with a high degree of self-esteem. There are four girls in my family, and I never would have guessed my parents wanted it any other way. The summer Jack and I were engaged, he asked me how my parents felt about not having any sons. "Well, I know my Dad loves it. He's the only boy in the

Motherhood—Blessing or Burden?

Lisa Ray Turner
Albuquerque, New Mexico

"Joy and rejoicing in your posterity"—the words of the familiar phrase echoed in my head. I had heard these words, or similar sentiments, for as long as I could remember, but the time had not been right to start a family. My graduate school schedule was incompatible with pregnancy. A history of miscarriages scared me, and I wondered whether I would even be able to have a successful pregnancy.

I had never been the type to "ooh" and "ah" over friends' babies, and small children were not terribly interesting to me. I was afraid of turning into the mush-for-brains stereotype of a mother, unable to communicate about anything but diapers and the latest adorable antic of my toddler. My husband and I had prayed frequently about family decisions and felt good about the path that we were following.

Eventually, I began to want a baby. This desire was partially motivated by my approaching thirtieth birthday. The proverbial "biological time clock"—a phrase I had dismissed as a cliché of the 80's—started to tick. Eventually, biology won. I got pregnant the same month that I received my Master's degree, two months before I turned thirty.

Like all first-time expectant parents, I experienced a wide spectrum of emotions. I was thrilled about pregnancy and, after six years of marriage, felt ready for parenthood. I was, of course, apprehensive about the new role and soon realized there was a lot to learn about babies. I didn't know what to expect. I had no idea what life with a newborn would be like. I wondered if I'd know what to do with a baby and speculated whether motherhood would be exciting or exhausting.

I soon realized that other parents were very willing to offer advice and give information, and indeed, many gave unsolicited counsel. I became a sponge, soaking up any tidbit of helpful information. My vocabulary began to expand. To think that six months earlier I had been unable to converse about Leboyer, Lamaze, colic, breastfeeding, pacifiers, and baby paraphernalia. It was a whole new world!

My husband and I soon noticed we could tell how parents felt about their children and family life by the advice they offered. We noticed that friends outside the Church spoke differently about parenthood than those within it. Typical comments from friends from work and non-Church activities were: "You're in for a wonderful experience." "Kids are so fun." "Your life will change, but for the better."

Comments from ward members were often in the following vein: "Have fun now because once that baby comes, it's all over." "Your freedom is gone." "Children are a real drain." One friend told me, "I'm tired of having these babies I'm 'supposed' to have." Is that joy and rejoicing?

For my entire life, I'd been taught how highly Mormons regard their family lives, that parenthood is the greatest of life's aspirations and that children are highly valued in our culture. It was unsettling to hear Church friends complain about their children while non-members gushed about theirs. I asked myself whether the talk about the glories of parenthood was just lip service and felt dismayed by the notion that my friends were gritting their teeth to fulfill their parental responsibilities.

Why do we have children? Do we truly enjoy them or do we find our large families overwhelming and burdensome? Are we thoughtful about making the decision to have children? In short, do we really derive joy and rejoicing from our posterity?

The first issue to consider is why we have children in the first place. Are our reasons different from those of non-members? In some ways, I think they are. We, of course, share the biological urge to propagate the species and the need to share our lives with a family; however, we also have children to insure salvation and to be righteous and obedient. There is a sense of duty to have children—it is our obligation to provide bodies for spirits.

On the flip side of these theological issues, there are social reasons. Social pressure to have children is strong. This is true in society at large, but in Mormon culture, there are unique pressures because childbearing is equated with righteousness. Couples who are childless by choice are often regarded as selfish.

During the childless years of my marriage, I received considerable pressure to get pregnant. Some comments came in the guise of gentle teasing. Some were outrightly judgmental, such as when I was asked, "Why don't you have children? Didn't you make a covenant in the temple to have children?" During one particularly bothersome week, I counted the inquiries about my intentions to have children—nine in one week! My heart goes out to women who struggle with infertility and must contend with such thoughtless questions. Women who have chosen to delay childbearing often feel they must have a baby

before they really want to.

Perhaps more problematic is the feeling that there is no choice to make—that is, if we are righteous we will not delay children. Period. There is no decision and no allowance for individual situations. As a result, many couples do not consider the consequences of having children—the physical, emotional, and financial demands.

Official Church policy on birth control is nebulous. Counsel given to members often depends on the feelings of the bishop. There is little specific direction on family planning. The responsibility is with the individual couple, which is as it should be. Unfortunately, however, the issue is often fraught with confusion and guilt.

Prayerful, intelligent decision making is critical. One woman may be fulfilled and able to happily deal with eight children under the age of nine. Another may not be able to handle two. There is nothing wrong with diversity in family sizes, and there should be no judgment. Large families are desirable in the Mormon culture, but it is ludicrous to think that every woman should have one. When we make appropriate decisions, we will have more satisfying experiences as mothers. Our decisions to have children will be motivated by righteous, natural desires—not by external factors.

When I had my first baby, I was shocked by the intensity of my feelings for him and embarrassed by my change from cynical observer to unabashedly devoted mother. My second baby arrived two years later, and the love affair repeated itself. I recently welcomed our third son into our family. I'm still floating on a cloud of postpartum euphoria, enjoying enormously the sweet smell and soft skin of my new baby. I hear myself saying, with some surprise, that children are fun. Yes, fun! They are also frustrating, annoying, and a lot of work. But above all else, they are to be enjoyed and loved, not resented. The birth of a baby should be celebrated, not dreaded. My hope for Mormon mothers is that we will be the most prepared and capable of mothers and that parenthood will truly be a blessing, not a burden. If entered into for the right reasons, at the right time, it is a rich, intense experience. We have the responsibility of discovering what is the best course for us to follow. We owe that not only to ourselves but also to our children. ■

family." I can honestly say I never heard them say anything about trying again or hoping for a son next time or anything. Instead, I remember overhearing my parents talking at the kitchen table to a friend who had questioned them about this and my Dad said, "Oh, we wouldn't have it any other way, Tom."

Like many people who grew up during the Depression, Mom wanted us to have all the opportunities and advantages she never had. So we had dancing, golf, tennis, piano, diving, and swimming lessons. Mom was afraid of horses, but she wanted us to learn to ride like my Dad.

Then came the summer of my choosing. Surprisingly, or maybe not, I chose a companion much like the person my mother chose for her companion. And when Mom was helping me pick out dishes and things for which to register for our wedding, I found myself choosing her patterns, Grand Baroque by Wallace. It still amazes (and delights) me because at twenty-two that was so unlike me.

Once when my children and I were discussing something that I was insisting that they do, Mom said, "Oh, kids, just do it and save the fuss. Your mom has made up her mind, and you know how stubborn she can be." I winked at the kids, looked at my mom, and said, "Now I wonder where I could have inherited that." Anyway, there are those times when I just have to look, smile to myself, and say, "Your stamp is indelibly upon me, Mom. And why

shouldn't it be? You worked hard at it."

The truth is that I am passing many of the same messages on to my children. Patterns are hard to break. The blessings as well as the sins of the fathers are visited on the heads of the children. The point isn't that my mother was perfect, because she wasn't, or that she raised perfect children, because she didn't. She made lots of mistakes just as we all do. She, on occasion, has even been known to do some crazy and outlandish things. The point is that she is my mother, and I am fiercely loyal to her and am eternally grateful for her.

Once, when I had chastised my son Clay for something, he said, "Don't tell Nana." "And why do you think I would tell Nana that?" I responded. "Because," he said, "she's your best friend and you tell her everything."

A friend once told me when we were talking about our mothers, "Oh, Linda, you're not being objective," but I say to you, how can you be objective about your mother, someone who has such a powerful influence over your life, positive or negative, the reverberations of which will be felt even in the lives of your own children.

One of the greatest blessings of having children of my own is that my judgments aren't so harsh. I think, I hope, that I am more understanding. When Clay was about six weeks old, I remember standing in the hall with him. Jack was asleep, it was dark, and the house was quiet except for Clay's

crying. A six-week old baby is hard for me: The baby is old enough for me to be tired and not old enough to sleep well at night. Because he was my first, I didn't know how much longer the crying would go on. Anyway, I remember holding him in the hallway in my arms, looking at him, hoping he would just go to sleep. Looking down, I was overcome by the feeling that my mother had done this for me, walked the floor with me, stayed up nights with me. She had done this for me. I started crying with an overwhelming feeling of gratitude. I realize how high the stakes are, how costly the game, and how difficult it really is.

So for all mothers on Mother's Day, recognize the difficult nature of the job, the fact that there is very little training for it, and the reality that most mothers do it very well. The majority of us turn out to be decent human beings. And yet, a mother's impact may not be fully felt or appreciated until later in life. Sometimes, sadly, too late.

So, as I see it, we have two challenges: (1) In whatever way is appropriate in your family, love, honor, and say an occasional thank you to this important person in your life, and (2) recommit yourself to your own children and hope that someday your children will lovingly do the same, generously overlooking your faults. ■

AN URBAN WRITER OF MERIT

Virginia Sorensen
Hendersonville, North Carolina

Windows on the Sea and Other Stories
by Linda Sillitoe, 1989

In a prepublication statement about Linda Sillitoe's collection of short stories, *Windows on the Sea*, I called her "Sandburgian." This seems—even to me, now—a curious comparison. But it came honestly at that moment when I happened to be immersed in the story of Sandburg and was amazed by the variety of his prodigious output. When I met Linda in her home in the autumn of 1988, she had just published *Salamander*, and I carried with me, for an inscription, *Sideways to the Sun*. Heretofore, I had read stories and poems, and now, she told me, she was off the next morning to work on a documentary on the Navajos.

Her husband John was my host in Utah, having arranged a series of lectures for me at universities, elementary schools, and libraries. They also arranged a party for me on my first night in Utah, where I met various writers and publishers and the three Sillitoe children, the youngest of whom was Cynthia, in the age group for which my children's books are listed. She and her sister Melissa both aspired to be writers, and my instant rapport with Cynthia ripened into a correspondence. At Christmas, she sent me a bound book of her latest works and the awful news that a computer had "gobbled up" the first six chapters of her first novel.

Linda, housewife-hostess, mother and writer, and absorbed student of Native Americans, seemed to me a carbon copy of Myself When Young. At her age, I was taking care of a professor-husband and house and children, doing a series of articles for *The Rocky Mountain News* and reviewing for Rita Van Doren's *Herald-Tribune Books*, writing *The Evening and the Morning*, and traveling to Mexico on a Guggenheim Fellowship to study the Yaqui Indians.

When I first read *Windows on the Sea*, in manuscript, I wrote admiringly to Linda about her stories, thinking how lucky she was to have her homekeeper-career woman dilemma nearly a half of a century after I had mine. She may be tired and overworked, but at least she was not criticized for being a writer at all. Besides, her husband not only understood but applauded and helped out, although protesting that he was not at all like the escapist in her novel.

Any modern urban writer must deal with (or certainly be aware of) homelessness, poverty, drugs, and child abuse, together with that phenomenon unknown in my day, support groups and frank discussions about everything.

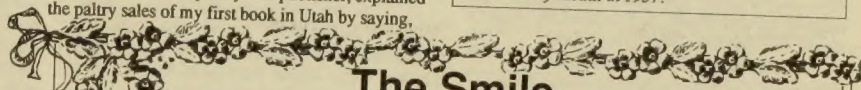
A few of the dilemmas in these stories are strictly Mormon: the struggle for important and influential positions (or didn't I notice, not being extremely active in my ward), the painful responsibilities of bishops and home teachers, and even polygamy as an answer found by one bereaved young wife. A panicky husband-hunting goes on in "He Called Us Mormon Nuns," and I found myself laughing aloud at the description of two parents trying to make their children behave through three meetings—three, can one imagine a more terrible Sunday?

There seems in modern Mormonism a good deal of acute discomfort for virtue's sake—and no wonder with Church officials reporting to their wives, as in "Susanna in the Meadow," meetings where "we excommunicated two people, disfellowshipped one. Adultery, homosexuality, and heresy." I don't remember any excommunications in my childhood days, but, of course, that was a half of a century ago. Family problems and misfortunes and misfits were put in the closet and kept there. It was much easier for a writer to be sensational when there were secret skeletons, when nobody talked about sex or wrote about it

without a lot of moonlight and roses.

The first story, "A String of Intersections," is about friendship and its hidden failures. "The Last Day of Spring," well titled, is about the end of childhood innocence—and happiness. "The Spiral Stair" describes a Scoutmaster with an inconvenient sense of humor, a clever story that is really about a wife's sacred duty to her member of the priesthood. "Second Sunday Lunch" is about four sisters who are all deeply moved by a dream one of them recounts about their dead mother, their feelings completely discounted, discarded, when they agree that they don't believe in dreams. Believing and not believing is, come to think of it, a common thread in many of these stories, as it must be in every story ever written about people and the systems they are born into. It is the most common of the necessary turns of the screw.

Alfred Knopf, my first publisher, explained the paltry sales of my first book in Utah by saying,



The Smile

Deborah Mayhew • Emerson, New Jersey

"You can come in now," the nurse called through the intercom. Every day it had been a different voice, but the inflection was always the same; the matter-of-fact tone of someone for whom the tragedies in the intensive care unit were a daily fact. I had been visiting my father once or twice a day now for two weeks, having flown out to California from the East at the point when the viral pneumonia was ravaging his lungs had almost taken his life. Remarkably, he survived it, and, although he had been on a respirator for four weeks, he was starting to make gradual progress.

As I walked into the familiar room that had become my father's temporary home, a new nurse greeted me. His name was John, and while I waited for my father to wake up, John and I began to get acquainted. Being around the ICU for two weeks had given me a new appreciation of the level of human suffering these nurses faced weekly and of the inner strength that they must have to do this difficult work. I marveled at my own transformation. Two weeks ago, I did not think I would even have the courage to visit my father, and yet, here I was, talking with the nurses as if nothing were wrong, somehow having become stronger than I ever thought was possible.

As John and I talked, I began to realize that something was disturbing him. Perhaps it was his air of resignation, perhaps something in his eyes. We talked of how families pull together during difficult times and that is when he told me about his son, a four-year-old boy who was dying of cancer.

The news jolted me.

I could not even begin to imagine what it would be like to lose a child. His son was almost the same age as my daughter Janet, and I felt for him deeply. What amazed me was that for all of his heartbreak, John was here, quietly caring for my father. Seeing him face his personal tragedy with such courage and faith helped me to see my own family's sorrow in a new way. My father had a chance to recover and return to his life. This little boy would never even have a chance to live his. Somehow after meeting John and hearing his story I would never be the same again.

Just as my conversation with John changed me, many people in my life have taught me something special. Indeed, my life has been one of constant learning and transformation. I remember back to when I was a teenager, changing so quickly that each morning I woke up feeling like a different person. Later, in college, my transformation continued as I learned many new ideas and began to work out my own world view. I think back to how much that I changed after I married, then again later when I became a mother.

But along with my own monumental life changes, I have been transformed by association with

"The Mormons write and publish their own books. Why should they buy more when they have plenty of their own?" I hope a half of a century has changed that and that many people besides Saints will buy and read Linda Sillitoe. She is a very special writer indeed, and I hope that she will leave her journalism and documentaries behind her and give us more of her valuable fiction, long and short. ■

Virginia Sorensen, a novelist and writer of books for children, was born and brought up in Utah. Most of many her novels have been about her native West, from *A Little Lower Than the Angels* in 1942 to *Many Heavens* in 1954 to *Kingdom Come*, the story of her Danish ancestors, in 1960. She also became well known for her stories for children, among them *Miracles* on Maple Hill, which received the Newbery Medal in 1957.

other people, each one with something new, some personal insight to share. Some were strangers like John; others have been life-long friends and relatives whom I continue to learn from.

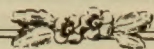
I am constantly impressed by my mother as she continues to develop and share her insights with me. She has such a natural approach to the world, is so connected to nature. Her celebration of life, through working in the garden and playing with her grandchildren, while my father was fighting for his life and she was literally being torn apart inside, was an inspiration I will never forget. She has a wisdom that goes beyond words.

During my stay in California, I had many experiences that taught me just how much we need other people, but the one that stands out above the rest took place on the final day of my visit. We had obtained permission to bring the children into the ICU. My father had never seen my one-year-old son and had not seen three-year-old Janet for some time. Although he could neither move nor speak, we were assured that he could hear and see us. When little Janet came in with me, she was not bothered a bit by the noisy life-support equipment or by the sight of my father's inert body. She only knew that this was her grandpa, a very special person. Her energy and radiance filled the room, and as I lifted her up to my father, she smiled her most angelic smile. A look of recognition came into his eyes as he saw her, and his whole face lit up with pure joy.

A few weeks later my mother called me and put my father on the line. It was the first time I had heard his voice for two months, and it was the most welcome phone call I had ever had. He sounded great: his voice was beginning to come back, and his spirits were high. He apologized for not remembering my visits. One of the drugs that he had been on caused amnesia so that his memories of the ordeal were scattered and confused. Nevertheless, he wanted to tell me about one very special memory he did have, one that he would never forget. It was of hearing my voice, looking up, and seeing a beautiful child's face smiling at him, the face of his granddaughter.

For my father and me, that was a great moment because we discovered that through all the terror and suffering there is still room for joy, and that no matter how tough life gets there will always be those special experiences to remind us how precious life really is.

Once again, one spirit had transformed another. Through the love of a child, my father's mind was touched. The smile that shone from his face that day is the most beautiful smile that I have ever seen. ■



CALL FOR BOOK REVIEWS

We would like to recruit reviewers for the following books, which we will provide. If you are interested, please contact Anne Wunderli, Exponent II, Box 37, Arlington, MA 02174.

An Abundant Life, The Memoirs of Hugh B. Brown by Firmage

A Good Time Coming, Mormon Letters to Scotland by Buchanan

"Wild Bill" Hickman and the Mormon Frontier by Hilton

Religious Seekers and the Advent of Mormonism by Vogel

Salamander by Sillitoe and Roberts

Establishing Zion by Campbell

Line Upon Line, Essays on Mormon Doctrine by Bergera

Mormons & Mormonism in U.S. Government Documents by Fales and Flake

History & Faith, Reflections of a Mormon Historian by Poll

One on a Seesaw, The Ups and Downs of a Single Parent by Pearson

An American Prophet's Record, The Diaries and Journals of Joseph Smith edited by Faulring

The Edge of the Reservoir, a novel by Morris

Quest for Refuge, The Mormon Flight from American Pluralism by Hill

Harvest, Contemporary Mormon Poems edited by England and Clark

The Romantic Obsessions & Humiliations of Annie Sehlmeier by Plummer

Only When I Laugh by Bell

Toward Understanding the New Testament by Tanner, Rogers, and McMurrin

Joseph Smith's New York Reputation Reexamined by Anderson

A Time to Kill: Reflections on War edited by Roy, Skabelund, and Hillam

Letters from Exile: The Correspondence of Martha Hughes and Angus M. Cannon by Lieber and Sillitoe

Strangers in Paradox: Exploration in Mormon Theology by Toscano and Toscano



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dear Sisters,

You don't know how glad I am to have *Exponent II* come into my home, thanks to my daughter. The problem of spousal abuse is swept under the rug, so to speak—only one lesson on it in Relief Society. In our ward, it was only half of a lesson; the rest of the time was spent on "Increase Fast Offerings."

When I was the injured party in spousal abuse many years ago, I felt I was the only one who was being heaped with psychological and increasingly physical abuse—this from my former husband whom I had married in the temple. I am thankful to God that I endured only two years of this abuse and that my bishop and also my lawyer, who is not LDS, recommended that I leave my husband. My attempts to reconcile with him (before my divorce became final) endangered my children and myself. Because of their advice, my children and I are alive, and they have blossomed into adults who have much self-confidence, intelligence, and optimism—something that wouldn't have happened if I had stayed with him. If I hadn't divorced him, life would have been much worse; it would have been more like the lives of the women that I read about in *Exponent* who endured ten or twenty or more years of abuse that nobody should have to undergo.

When another lesson on spousal and child abuse comes up, I'll have more to contribute because I plan to keep and use my issues of *Exponent II*.
Name Withheld

Dear Sisters,

You asked how drug addiction has affected our families and how we have handled it. One of my children is an addict and has been since she was ten years old, thirteen years now. I can say that the "Just Say No" campaign is a laugh. If my child could say "No," she would. She has struggled for years to stay clean and has not ever been successful for long. She has been institutionalized in one way or another for nearly four of the last six years.

The family breathes a sign of relief whenever she is in a structured atmosphere because we know she is alive. When she disappears, as she has now, we pray for her to have her suffering lessened, for her to contact us, and for her to have the strength to try recovery again. We pray that we might have the strength to handle whatever happens, for the knowledge to help her, for the strength to do whatever is necessary to help her into recovery.

Addiction has robbed my child of her adolescence, an education, and her health. She has a damaged liver, a heart murmur, and a venereal disease. All we seem to be able to do is try to let her

know that we love her and support her in her efforts to stay clean and remain in recovery.

I try not to feel guilty and try to deal with my depression when it occurs. I attend Nar-Anon meetings and occasionally see a therapist who is knowledgeable about drug problems.

Dealing with addiction has made me re-evaluate some of my values and views, and I'm a better person for that re-evaluation.

Betty Jo Wade
Burlingame, California

Dear *Exponent II*,

We were a picture of the "perfect Mormon family." Perfect pictures hide ugly stains. Wife battery and child abuse went on for years before it was brought into the open.

Thanks for being there when I struggled through some hard questioning of the Church and whether it was responsible for the problems my family went through. You helped me stay.

I'd be interested to know if there are other LDS women who have had similar experiences, especially with patriarchal tyranny; what response they received from Church leaders; and how their own testimonies have fared through it all.

Dana Cooper Reay
Mesa, Arizona

Dear Editor,

Several times my daughter has told me how much she appreciates and enjoys *Exponent II*. Then for Mother's Day this past year she gave me a subscription. How refreshing it is to read articles of such honesty and openness! *Exponent* provides a much-needed forum for women of the Church to communicate their feelings of love and appreciation for, as well as frustration with, life as a Latter-day Saint woman.

"Clay Pigs," the touching fiction in Volume XIV, Number 4, by Barbara Hart Dixon, made me think how comforting it would be to feel that we could share, really share, the feelings of our hearts in Relief Society and not have to weigh our words or wonder if we will be approved of or misunderstood. If we can develop that kind of intimacy as sisters, then the organization will truly fulfill its purpose.

Perhaps through exposure to forthrightness such as that found in *Exponent* we will one day be able to drop the pretense that, as Mormon women, we should all just love to sew, quilt, and take seasonal home-made treats each time we go visiting teaching; that if we will just live the gospel, all will be well with us; that if it's not, we are somehow to blame.

Perhaps we can learn to accept and even celebrate our own and others' individuality, to acknowledge and then communicate our honest

emotions. For it is only when true feelings are shared that we have the opportunity to "bear one another's burdens that they may be light . . . mourn with those that mourn . . . comfort those that stand in need of comfort." (Mosiah 18:8-9)

Marjorie Rice
Liberty, Utah

Dear Sisters,

I just finished reading and enjoying the issue on raising sons. Because I have a son who, at nine, decided that scouting was not for him (after a year of only token support from his parents), I was interested. But my real concern is, and has been, for my daughter. Perhaps you should have an issue about raising daughters.

When she was five years old, my daughter leaned over to me as the sacrament was being passed in our Provo ward and said, "Girls get to pass the sacrament, too, right?" It was a question that I knew would come, but it came much sooner than I had thought it would. I responded, "No, they don't."

"Why?" she whispered.

"Because," I replied, inadequately (but, remember, I was having to make this up as I went along), "they don't have the priesthood."

"So?" she asked, and I felt that somewhere, trumpets were sounding for this daughter who was then and still is willing to question the apparently arbitrary and capricious. I can't remember what I said after that, and I hope I didn't just hush her up. She has a near-perfect example of how the priesthood ought to be administered in her father, and I hope that his example sets a standard and answers some of her questions. Anyway, that issue is, for me, on the shelf until later. When my children ask why men hold the priesthood and women don't, my answer is that the men-only priesthood is for mortal life only, for those who are worthy; otherwise, there is no answer, and they should accept no other explanation unless something is said about the subject by a prophet.

Now, my daughter is eleven, teetering on the brink of the Young Women's program. I have been a Primary president and had other experiences in the Church that have led me to be concerned about the way we raise our daughters. I am appalled at the difference in resources, personnel, and money allocated for the boys and the girls. After all, nothing is really temporal—certainly not the influence of adults and of activities with one's peers. The boys, at Primary age, have both the Primary organization and the Cub Scout program, with attendant leaders, teachers, and activities. The girls have Primary, but there is nothing akin to Scouting for them in the Church. (I was a Daisy and then a Brownie Girl Scout leader for two years in hopes

(Continued on Page 20)

LETTERS

(Continued from Page 19)

that I could involve my daughter in Girl Scouts as I had been as a non-LDS child. But I am no longer a full-time homemaker, I don't enjoy working with other people's children, and I can't be a troop leader in perpetuity—although that made it easier for my son to be a part of the troop.)

When they turn twelve, boys are ordained to the priesthood and participate in Sunday School, Young Men, and the priesthood quorums, as well as Cub and then Boy Scouts. Girls participate in Sunday School and Young Women. There are extensive leadership structures for all. However, the leadership structure for the priesthood is that of the Church and, indeed, of the universe—the boys are in the "direct pipeline," with the bishop as their president. In addition, there is an extensive leadership structure at the ward, stake, and Church levels for Cub and Boy Scouts, with attendant activities. Further, the Scouting program operates in conjunction with the Young Men's program, with its leaders at the ward, stake, and Church levels, and its activities. The girls attend Young Women, which includes camping and other activities, some held jointly with the Young Men.

So, boys are involved in the priesthood, scouting, and Young Men, with attendant leaders, activities, and money. Girls are involved in Young Women, with attendant leaders, activities, and money. The boys are, in effect, "triple-teamed." This discrepancy either places a heavy burden on the Young Women's program or results in less time, attention, and resources for the girls. I fear the latter, in almost every case. What message are we sending to our daughters and sons about the importance of girls and women?

Before we had children, my husband and I taught a Sunday School class of ten year olds. They studied Church History. When we came to the Nauvoo era, we supplemented the manual with information on the founding of the Relief Society. I asked the class, "What do your mothers learn in Relief Society?"

The little boys sniggered. "How to can food." "How to diaper babies." I described the Relief Society course of study, told about the founding of the organization and the Prophet Joseph Smith's promises to its members, and gave a little information about women who had healed the sick and given blessings to one another in the early Church. The boys looked at me with disbelief. The one girl in the class said, "Really?" and her eyes lit up.

My daughter is looking forward to her twelfth birthday and her entrance into the Beehive class. I worry that, as she sees her brother reach various milestones one year after she does, she will notice that some people at Church think those milestones are more important for him than for her. I'm afraid he'll notice, too. I want my son to serve a mission, be married in the temple, raise righteous children, be a faithful member of the Church throughout his life, and receive all the richest blessings of eternity. I want exactly the same things for my daughter. I think the Savior does, too. I think they are equally worthy and deserving of the resources and programs that the Church offers. Why the disparity? What could or should be changed?

Lisa Bolin Hawkins
Provo, Utah

Editor:

During the October 1989 General Conference, Elder Russell M. Nelson gave a talk entitled "Woman—of Infinite Worth." He stated that "perhaps the Church does more to enlighten understanding about and to lift the cause of women than any other institution on earth." He basically defined a woman as a mother, with the subsequent roles being master communicator, teacher, secretary of labor, detective, medical forecaster, nurturer, helper

of the young, caretaker for the poor, and comforter of the broken-hearted.

How can we feel infinite worth when we're told how we should be, what we should be, and how we should feel? It seems to me that part of being human is discovering ourselves and then making decisions as to how we can best contribute to a better world. Furthermore, it seems a difficult task to feel infinite worth when a full-time wife is virtually one man away from losing her status, charisma, power and influence in the Church, just as a full-time mother is one man away from poverty.

There seems to be little hope if the younger Quorum members, like Elder Nelson, are taking up the traditional attitudes toward women. However, if there are other women who share similar feelings that women should be viewed by our Church leaders as individuals instead of defining their worth in terms of a role, I think that we should let our leaders know our perspective. The address of the Church Office Building is 50 East North Temple Street, Salt Lake City, UT 04150.

Carlan Yorkstetter
San Marino, California

Dear Sisters:

The *Exponent II* issue that was dedicated to a discussion of problems confronting us with substance abuse was most interesting.

Several years ago, after completing an M.S.W. at the University of Utah, I enrolled in and completed the certificate program in alcohol and drug abuse treatment. Afterwards, I prepared a concise, budget-type pamphlet that gives specific answers to questions concerning substance abuse. It has been read and approved by experts in the field.

As a public service, I have had 400 copies made for distribution. If anyone desires to order additional pamphlets, please send your order and money to:

Joan H. Haskins
1441 Harrison Ave.
Salt Lake City, UT 84105

The cost for copying the pamphlet is \$.30.

Kindly add a S.A.S.E. if ordering less than five. If ordering more than five, please include one dollar for postage. (Permission must be granted to reproduce the pamphlet; copyright is pending.) Together, through caring dedication, we can win the drug war.

Joan H. Haskins
Salt Lake City, Utah

Sisters:

Thank you for having Marilyn Smolka put together "Adolescents & Drugs." I think just the experience of dealing with teenagers makes the reading of this issue a must. It surely spoke to me; at this point I am not having to deal with substance abuse in my family—only teenagers.

My friendship with Marilyn began many years ago when our children were little and we all lived in the canyon. I know something of her spirit and her faith and her wonderful talents.

Please renew me another year!

Christina Preston
Bedford, Texas



Sunstone Symposium To Be Held in Washington, D.C.

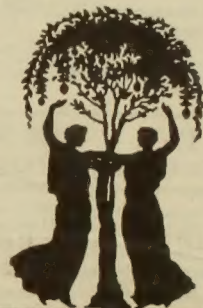
This year's Sunstone Symposium/East is scheduled for April 19-20, 1991, at The American University in Washington, D.C. Included in the program will be presentations by Maureen Ursenbach Beecher, Warner Woodworth, and Jan Shipp and the performance of Carol Lynn Pearson's one-woman play, "Mother Wove the Morning." For further information and reservations, call (203)496-7090.

RETREAT TO NEW ORLEANS

Come to New Orleans for an autumn retreat on the weekend of November 15-17. Estimated cost will be \$80. For information, contact Cynthia Van Dam, 4222 Eden Street, New Orleans, LA 70125, at (501) 822-3801, or Sue Hawes, 1781 Lafreniere Street, New Orleans, LA 70122, at (504) 283-5734 evenings.

T-SHIRT DESIGN COMPETITION

Think up a great new design for this year's T-shirt, and win yourself a free all-expenses-paid weekend at the *Exponent II* retreat in beautiful scenic New Hampshire! Send sketches, ideas, or finished artwork to POBox 37, Arlington, MA 02174. Contest entries must be postmarked by May 15, 1991.



EXPONENT II

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